Primary teachers as readers

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Primary Teachers as Readers

Abstract
In the context of the continued pressure and politicisation of the teaching of reading in England, the United Kingdom Literacy Association (UKLA) sought to ascertain patterns in primary teachers’ reading, both personally and professionally. The project, undertaken in 11 Local Authorities in England, explored 1200 primary teachers’ personal reading habits and preferences, investigated their knowledge of children's literature, and documented their reported use of texts in the classroom through a questionnaire. In addition, it sought to establish the extent of the teachers’ involvement with and use of local area /school library services. This paper reports on the findings with reference to the teachers’ personal reading, the frequency of this reading and the sources they use to select their reading material. It also considers the teachers’ favourite childhood texts and the books they identified as highly significant to them, as well as their perceptions of the importance of literature. Connections are made to the data gathered about their knowledge of children’s literature and how primary teachers decide which literature to work with in the classroom.

Key Words
Reading for pleasure, teachers’ reading habits and reading preferences, favourite childhood texts, knowledge of children’s literature, use of libraries.

Introduction
Since the inception of the National Literacy Strategy (NLS) (DfEE, 1998), concerns have been voiced about the ways in which children’s literature has been positioned and may be
used in the classroom. For example, the practice of leaning upon extracts at the expense of engaging with whole texts has been heavily criticised (Dombey, 1998; Frater, 2000; Sedgwick, 2000; King, 2001) and concerns about the amount of time devoted to teachers’ reading aloud to children have been raised (Martin, 2003). There has also been a sense that as the knowledge and skills delineated in the detailed curriculum objectives have been privileged teachers’ and children’s own creative engagement with literature may have been sidelined (Marshall, 2001; Grainger et al., 2005). Professional writers too have expressed their consternation that their work has been subject to inappropriate levels of analytical scrutiny which could lead to reduced pleasure in the text and diminish children’s desire to read (Powling et al., 2003, 2005; Pullman 2005). Indeed, there is evidence from a number of sources suggesting that despite high standards of reading attainment in England, there has been an apparent decline in reading for pleasure. The Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS) for example (Mullis et al., 2003; Twist et al, 2003) found that ten year olds in the UK read less independently, and find rather less pleasure in reading than many of their peers in other countries. England had the second highest proportion of children who had explicitly negative attitudes towards reading (13% compared with an international average of 6%). In addition, comparative UK research has revealed a decline in reading for pleasure from the onset of the NLS in 1998 to 2003 (Sainsbury and Shagen, 2004). In this study, although the majority of children still reported enjoying reading stories, their desire to do so had markedly decreased, for example from 77% to 65% in 10-11 year olds, whilst the percentage of boys at this age who say they enjoy reading declined from 70% in 1998 to 55% in 2003.
It has been argued that teachers’ confidence in knowing and using children’s literature may be limited, particularly by lack of time to read personally for pleasure (Kwek et al., 2007; Arts Council England, 2003). In the current climate, with a high profile afforded the embedding of a systematic and synthetic phonics programme in schools, following the Rose Review (Rose, 2006), the pressure of time is unlikely to ease. Yet effective teachers of reading in the primary phase need much more than knowledge of the skills and various cueing systems which young readers employ; they also need an extensive knowledge of children’s literature (Medwell et al., 1998). The extent of their knowledge in this area is unknown, for while studies of children’s attitudes to reading and knowledge of literature have been undertaken (e.g. Whitehead, 1977; Hall and Coles, 1999; Clark and Foster, 2005; Maynard et al., 2007) no UK studies have systematically documented primary teachers’ reading habits, nor their knowledge and use of children’s literature.

The research team believed it was timely to undertake research into teachers as readers and ascertain their knowledge and use of such literature in the primary classroom. Since there is also some evidence that teachers do not make significant use of children’s and school librarians or libraries (Ofsted, 2004), this research provided an opportunity to consider the working relationships between teachers and librarians and look for ways of developing innovative partnerships.

As a consequence the research sought to explore the following areas:

- primary teachers’ personal reading habits and preferences
- primary teachers’ knowledge of children's literature
• primary teachers’ reported use of children’s literature in the primary classroom
• primary teachers’ involvement in local area (Youth Library Service /School Library Services).

It involved two phases:

Phase I: An audit of teachers’ reading habits, knowledge and classroom practices undertaken through a questionnaire.

Phase II: A development phase, responsive to Phase 1 and involving groups of teachers in a number of Local Authorities (LAs) working with local library services.

This paper reports upon one tranche of the data from Phase I of the research relating to teachers’ personal reading habits and preferences and makes some connections with data which reflect the teachers’ knowledge of children’s literature and their reported use of it in the classroom.

**Methodology**

Linking into United Kingdom Literacy Association (UKLA) networks and the UKLA children’s literature Special Interest Group (SIG) members, the research team collected questionnaire responses from 1200 primary teachers in 11 LAs in England as well as from some student teachers in 5 different institutions. Information was also gathered about the length of experience, the age phase in which they teach and their responsibilities in school.
The Local Authorities represented a spread of inner city, rural and urban areas reflecting a range of socio-economic status. The questionnaire was piloted, adapted and introduced to teachers on continuing professional development short courses. Each LA had a designated co-ordinator who completed context sheets and administered the questionnaire. The LA co-ordinators made efforts to administer the questionnaires at generic courses for classroom teachers rather than on courses specifically intended for literacy coordinators. This meant that the research team could gain evidence of a more general picture of teachers’ knowledge and experience of children’s literature. The questionnaire on reading was completed and returned on the same day to ensure a high response rate and a wealth of data from a range of LAs in different parts of the country, thus increasing the validity and reliability of the findings. Both qualitative and quantitative information about teachers’ views, knowledge and practices with regard to reading was sought; the former has been subjected to categorical analysis, the latter has been inputted and analysed by a research assistant making use of the quantitative software package SPSS (no. 13). Of the 1200 respondents, approximately half whom work with 5-7 year olds (Key Stage 1) and approximately half with 7-11 year olds (Key Stage 2), with varying lengths of teaching experience and diverse school responsibilities.

The data yield connections and relationships between the three strands of the research, namely the teachers’ personal reading habits and preferences, their knowledge of children's literature and their reported use of such literature in the classroom. As previously noted, this paper focuses mainly upon the teachers’ own reading habits and choices.
Findings and discussion

Teachers’ recent reading

In response to a question which sought to identify if and when the teachers had last read personally for pleasure, 73% reported having done so during the last month and 20% during the last three months. 5% had read for pleasure during the last 6 months and only 2% over 6 months ago. The questionnaire was undertaken well after the summer vacation (end of October-December, 2006), so whilst the data may have been influenced by this extended opportunity to engage with books, the team do not believe it skewed the picture, although the half term period was clearly within the last month for a proportion of the sample. In addition, it must be acknowledged that because book reading tends to be seen as a socially approved activity and the questionnaire was clearly framed by the UKLA, then some over-reporting may be present. Notwithstanding these issues, since the great majority of the respondents had made time for their own reading pleasures within three weeks of answering the questionnaire, it seems that for the majority of the teachers, reading remains a source of satisfaction. These teachers at least are evidently readers who choose to make time for their own reading and find pleasure in settling down with a book. This finding is in tune with large scale studies which have consistently found that the vast majority of the population read, for example Reading the Situation (Book Marketing Ltd. 2000), a study commissioned by the Library and Information Commission to examine reading habits of children and adults at the turn of the century in Britain.

In terms of what these teachers had read recently for pleasure, popular fiction was the most frequent choice accounting for 40% of the responses. It comprised: women’s popular literature and ‘chicklit’ (16%) genre fiction written for and marketed to young
women (recorded as such by the respondents), thrillers (15%) and crime stories (9%). The research was conducted in 2006, the year that *The Da Vinci Code* was widely available and much discussed and this was the most mentioned thriller title, although other Dan Brown books were also listed. Other frequently mentioned authors included Cecelia Aherne, Patricia Cornwell, Joanne Harris, Nick Hornby, Sophie Kinsella, Alexander McCall Smith, Ian Rankin and Zadie Smith. Books which had been promoted in bookshops and on television shows during 2006, for example *The Kite Runner* (Khaled Hosseini), *The Island* (Victoria Hislop) and *The Time Traveller’s Wife* (Audrey Niffenegger) were often mentioned, reflecting the influence of the media on teachers’ contemporary reading choices.

Autobiography and biography were also very popular (14%) particularly those of people who had triumphed over adversity, although there were some of celebrities and sports’ stars. Torey Hayden’s books about children with learning and social difficulties were top of the list and Sharon Osbourne’s autobiography received several mentions. 14% of the sample recorded other recent (post 1980s) novels, with *Captain Correlli’s Mandolin* (Louis de Bernieres) and *Birdsong* (Sebastian Faulks) being most often mentioned. 6.5% had recently read children’s fiction, including novels which have been widely also read by adults sometimes referred to as ‘crossover’ books. *Harry Potter* (JK Rowling) was top of this list and there were multiple mentions of *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time* (Mark Haddon). 2.5% noted newspapers and magazines as their most favoured reading and very small percentages (less than 2%) recorded lifestyle/health, religious/spiritual, academic, educational, practical/factual travel short stories, poetry and plays. In the *Reading the Situation* (Book Marketing Ltd, 2000, p.145) survey, the
authors noted that ‘most respondents stuck mainly to a few preferred genres… and sometimes to a few preferred authors’. In terms of the diversity available, they also suggest most adult readers select from a narrow band of books, although this can and does change with time, as their books are exhausted or new authors are tried. Overall, the data from the UKLA survey’s many questions suggest that for these teachers the pleasures of popular fiction are balanced by the satisfactions of reading which prompts thought and reflection.

**Teachers’ selection of significant texts**

The teachers were invited to comment upon what they thought was the most important book they had ever read. The highest percentage recorded (17%) was for religious/spiritual books, with 12% for significant recent novels (post 1980s) in second place. Following these, high scoring categories were: 19th century and earlier classics (11%); children’s fiction (11%); autobiography and biography (9%); 20th century American classics (9%) and 20th century European classics (5.5%). Smaller percentages were recorded for: allegorical books (4.5%); lifestyle/health (3.5); academic, educational and practical/factual books scored just over 2% but all other categories, including popular fiction, poetry, plays and travel scored less than 2%.

When choosing their most important book, the respondents discounted popular fiction in favour of religious, spiritual, allegorical and exemplary books. The Bible was mentioned 110 times but also many books with themes of morality and equity were mentioned, including very recent as well as 20th century fiction. The responses included many
classics, both from Europe and North America. The individual novels mentioned over 10 times included:

*To Kill a Mockingbird* Harper Lee  27  
*The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time* Mark Haddon  21  
*Lord of the Rings* JRR Tolkien  17  
*Jane Eyre* Charlotte Bronte  16  
*Wuthering Heights* Anne Bronte  16  
*Birdsong* Sebastian Faulks  16  
*Pride and Prejudice* Jane Austen  15  
*The Diary of Anne Frank*  10

Several of these would have been studied in school, as would others such as *Lord of the Flies* and *The Catcher in the Rye* which were both mentioned over five times. The frequent mention of such books, which would have appeared - and in many cases continue to appear - on examination curricula, suggests just how important teachers can be in bringing literature to young readers. Perhaps also, books which we have read and re-read, thought about, discussed and analysed stay in our memories and may even be re-read later in life.

**Teachers’ favourite childhood texts**

The overwhelming majority of respondents (over 60%) recorded popular fiction as their favourite childhood reading. Blyton and Dahl were by far the most mentioned authors with over 200 mentions each of various titles. 10% of favourite childhood books were 19th century classics such as *Black Beauty* (Anna Sewell) (with 23 mentions), *Heidi*
(Johanna Spyri) (19 mentions), *Little Women* (Louisa M. Alcott) and *What Katy Did* (Susan Coolidge) (13 mentions each). Relatively high numbers were also recorded for 20th century classics such as *The Lion the Witch and the Wardrobe* (C.S. Lewis) with over 50 mentions, *The Hobbit* (JRR Tolkein) (16), *Swallows and Amazons* (Arthur Ransome) (15) and *Winnie the Pooh* (A.A. Milne) (14). 9% of the total were picture books; *The Very Hungry Caterpillar* (Eric Carle) topped the list with 13 mentions. Very few indeed (1.5%) noted poetry as their favourite childhood reading although this may, in part at least, have been a function of the question which referred to a favourite ‘book’ as a child, triggering perhaps a memory of a narrative. Nonetheless this response is in line with the limited mention of poetry in the question on recently recorded reading and is reinforced by the extremely limited knowledge of children’s poets known to these teachers. It is no surprise, perhaps, that popular or series fiction was so pre-eminent, but the connection between teachers’ favourite childhood reading and the texts they currently offer in the classroom is worth considering a little more.

**Teachers’ knowledge of children’s books**

The teachers were invited to name six ‘good’ children’s authors, six good poets and six picture book authors/illustrators. The term ‘good’ was defined for the respondents as referring to writers whose work they as teachers had found both valuable and successful with primary age children.

When asked to list 6 ‘good’ children’s writers, 64% of the teachers named five or six writers. 46% named six. Roald Dahl gained the highest number of mentions by far (744). The nearest four were: Michael Morpurgo (343), Jacqueline Wilson (323), JK Rowling
(300) and Anne Fine (252). The recurrence of just a few names of children’s authors is in strong contrast to the wide range of authors and individual books which the teachers noted in their own reading for pleasure. In addition, the teachers’ own reading indicates knowledge of global literature although this is not reflected in their classroom choices. In terms of the books chosen for children, the range is severely limited. These differences raise some questions:

- Are teachers relying on their own favourite childhood reading when selecting books for the classroom?
- Might the National Literacy Strategy requirement (based on the NC [DfE, 1995]) to study ‘significant children’s authors’ have a narrowing effect on teachers’ classroom choices?
- Are these authors the ones which are most promoted by booksellers?
- Does this support the commonsense view that teachers simply don’t have time to extend their knowledge of children’s books?
- How far do economic constraints affect the range of available books in the classroom?

It was not possible to probe the data to find out any answers to these questions, but in considering the responses to the other questions which asked about teachers’ knowledge of children’s books, and thus their capacity to make informed recommendations to the diverse young readers in their classes, there does appear to be considerable cause for concern.
For example, when asked to name 6 good poets for children 58% of the respondents could only name one, two or no poets. 22% named no poets at all. Only 10% named 6 poets. The highest number of mentions was Michael Rosen (452) with five others gaining over a hundred mentions: Allan Ahlberg (207), Roger McGough (197), Roald Dahl (165), Spike Milligan (159) and Benjamin Zephaniah (131).

With reference to picture fiction, over half the sample (62%) only named one, two or no picture fiction writers. 24% named no picture fiction authors/illustrators, whilst 10% named six. Many of these picturebook makers were also named as ‘authors’ in the first list. The highest number of mentions by far was for Quentin Blake (423) with four others being mentioned over a hundred times: Anthony Browne (175), Shirley Hughes (123), Mick Inkpen (121) and Alan Ahlberg (146). There were also 302 specifically named books rather than authors.

The data with regard to teachers’ knowledge of children’s fiction, authors, poets and picture book creators, suggests that their breadth of knowledge is limited and that they are drawing upon a very narrow range for use in the classroom. This was verified by the data drawn from several questions which focused upon what teachers read aloud to their classes and how often they undertake this pleasure-based activity. It is clear that this remains a popular activity, with 70% of the respondents commenting they were either currently reading a book aloud to the class or had read a book aloud during the previous month, although 45% of Key Stage 2 teachers had either only read a complete book to their class within the last three or six months or had never done so; reading aloud diminishes considerably in older classes. Picture books were by far the most frequently
read to the class with 35% of the response. However, given the somewhat limited replies to the question asking the teachers to name picture book authors, this raises a question about the range of picture books which are read aloud. In terms of the novels read aloud, if the range of known authors clusters around a restricted list of names, as suggested by the responses to other questions, even the pleasurable activity of hearing books read aloud may not include a wide range and it is likely that global literature may only be reflected in fairy tales and short stories. The analysis of this list of texts is currently ongoing.

*Teachers sourcing their reading habit*

In answer to the multiple options offered to the question about where teachers find books for their personal reading, it was clear a range of sources were employed, the teachers were invited to tick as many as were pertinent. Bookshops - local (mentioned by 80%) and on-line (36%) - were the most popular, although friends were mentioned as a frequent resource (mentioned by 56%). In contrast, libraries were not recorded as a common source of getting reading material (36%)(see Figure 1). Some respondents noted other additional routes to finding reading material including advertising, ‘Richard and Judy’ recommendations and magazine/newspaper reviews. Some did not respond to this question.

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<tr>
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<td>Bookshop</td>
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<tr>
<td>On-line bookshop</td>
<td>388</td>
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<tr>
<td>Friends</td>
<td>607</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>118</td>
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<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
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Figure 1. Responses to the question *How do you usually get hold of books for your own reading?*

The data suggest that whilst teachers make good use of their local bookshops and their friends, relatively few use their local library. The number of teachers who noted friends as an influential factor may relate to the high proportion of female respondents in the survey, since as *Reading the Situation* found, for ‘women at any level of reading, the most common and trusted source about new authors is personal recommendation - and their circle of friends/relations/work colleagues is also probably the most common source of books to read’ (Book Marketing Ltd. 2000,p.147). No data was unfortunately collected as to the number of teachers who are members of reading groups; this could have been valuable additional information and might have linked to the issue of personal networks and reading sustenance.

In employing a number of strategies in combination in order to make their selection, the teachers in this survey could be aligned with those interviewed by Ross (2001) who
interviewed almost 200 adult readers and found that avid readers differed from frustrated or novice readers in their use of a variety of strategies. As a consequence, Ross, McKechnie and Rothbauer (2006) argue that ‘confident readers teach themselves strategies for choosing enjoyable books that less practised readers may never discover’. They perceive that ‘being able to choose successfully is an important skill that is never directly taught but is learned by readers who teach themselves, beginning in childhood’ (p.201).

In deciding which books to use in the classroom, many teachers in the UKLA survey used several criteria, the highest category being personal knowledge and interest (85%) with children’s recommendations being another much noted factor (64%). 31% report taking guidance from the literacy coordinator in their school and 21% report using librarians’ recommendations. However, the fact that so many teachers rely upon their own knowledge when this is evidently somewhat narrow with regard to children’s literature represents a real cause for concern. The data about how teachers select books for school is in contrast to their practices with regard to sourcing their personal reading and it would seem that different practices drive the teachers personally and professionally. It is intriguing to speculate on this difference and it is hoped that the development phase of the project will help to explain this anomaly.

Questions about library use indicated that 52% of respondents use the local library facilities for school, mostly for borrowing books for classroom use, although a few also make use of it for professional and personal reading and for visits to the library and from librarians. Only 14% had visited the local library with a class within the last 3 months and
6% within the last 6 months. The largest percentage (60%) had not taken children to visit the local library for over 6 months and 18% recorded never having visited the local library with a class. Again, Phase II of the project is designed to try to develop firmer and more extensive links with local library services.

**The significance of literature**

Respondents were asked at the close of the questionnaire to rank statements about the importance of literature in:

- developing reading
- developing writing
- widening knowledge
- engaging the emotions
- developing the imagination.

The role of literature in developing the imagination received the highest rating with developing the emotions being perceived as the second priority. Promoting reading and widening knowledge were ranked third and fourth, with the role of literature in developing writing being rated as having the least importance. In recognising the deep imaginative value and emotional engagement which literature can offer, the survey’s respondents clearly seek such satisfactions, sustaining themselves as adult readers. However, their limited knowledge of children’s authors suggest some tensions and difficulties exist for these primary phase professionals, who may be able to successfully source their own reading habits, but are not in a strong position to support younger learners in developing their own preferences. Whilst the teachers in this survey may find
time at home to read personally, the diminishing frequency of sharing literature as children grow older suggests that they may be finding it difficult in school to prioritise reading for pleasure. The lowest rating of the role of literature in developing writing further suggests that the teachers did not necessarily see the important links between reading and writing. This raises the question of whether there is a tendency to divorce literature from pedagogy. Has literature become a mere tool for teachers to employ in the context of reading instruction, a resource for shared and guided reading? The data on the teachers’ classroom practice is being reported separately, but suffice to say, a worrying proportion of these professionals describe their work with literature in a functionally oriented manner.

**Conclusion and implications**

A mixed picture of teachers’ habits and pleasures, preferences and practices emerges from the data. Memories of favourite reading as children and current reading for pleasure are dominated by popular fiction, although the sample as a whole reflects a wide range of types of reading, including children’s and ‘crossover’ fiction. There is an emphasis on affective content, as evidenced by choices of autobiography and biography many of which were about people who had suffered indignity, emotional, political and physical deprivation and triumphed over adversity.

It is clear that primary phase teachers are keen readers themselves, enjoying fast-paced, engaging narratives. It is equally clear that many of the books which teachers treasure the most were introduced to them by their own teachers. If their own school experiences have been influential in forming teachers’ choices of significant books then the current
generation of teachers have a key role in promoting enjoyment and commitment to reading in their own classrooms. However, since so many of these primary professionals indicate that they rely on their own knowledge of children’s books to make decisions about classroom reading, the relatively narrow range of their knowledge of authors, poets and picture fiction creators is a matter of considerable concern.

If teachers’ enjoyment of reading can be extended to a wider range of authors then this can only be beneficial for future readers whose diverse interests and reading preferences deserve to be both honoured and extended. In addition, the data suggest that teachers’ knowledge of children’s poetry, picture fiction and global literature needs considerable development, if they are to avoid merely teaching for the ‘minimum entitlement’: a level 4. Instead Martin (2003) asserts, teachers need to focus on the ‘maximum entitlement’ of every child: to become a reader for life. He emphasises the value of voluntary reading and argues that it should lie at the very heart of the teaching of literature, arguing that:

The best teachers of literature are those for whom reading is important in their own lives and who read more than the texts they teach. Readers know how to trust the text so that it stands in its own right and does not need to be something which is used to get somewhere else. A poem is worth reading for its own sake not simply in order to teach something about poetry. Being a reader of literature gives a teacher the confidence to teach powerfully’

(Martin, 2003, p.16)

Our research reveals a tension between the personal habits and pleasures of the adult teacher readers and their knowledge and practice with regard to children’s literature. The
situation is no doubt further compounded by the persistent pressure of accountability, targets and tests in school, this may be perceived as putting a stranglehold on pedagogic practice which enables teachers’ and pupils’ engagement and response.

Recent work about identities and reading suggests that the choice of books and teachers’ mediation of them has a profound effect on ‘how [children] see themselves and who they want to be’ (McCarthey and Moje, 2002, p.237). (See also Silin, 2003). At the same time, teachers’ literate identities are becoming a focus for research (Moore, 2004) and since, as Moore (ibid, p.337) points out, ‘the school culture remains the dominant learning culture’, the findings from the ‘Teachers as Readers’ research suggest the need for further attention to the formation of teachers’ and pupils’ literate identities and experiences. Crucially, too, since the research indicates minimal use of global literature in the classroom, children from cultural or linguistic minority groups may well be marginalised unless teachers’ own reading repertoires can be urgently expanded.

There are implications in this work, undertaken in the context of the review of the primary curriculum (The Primary Review) for both initial teacher education and continuing professional development. With regard to the former, it may well be worth revisiting the valuable Arts Council initiative ‘Literature Matters’ (2004-6), which sought to help increase student teachers’ knowledge of children’s books and to build partnership projects between libraries and initial teacher education. Several successful new projects were created and new relationships brokered, but the project lacked both sustained funding and structural support and has now drawn to a close (Bailey, Hall and Gamble, 2007). With regard to the latter, more experienced practising professionals also deserve
sustained opportunities to widen their repertoire of potent children’s texts and powerful children’s authors, and to explore the relationship between who they are as readers and who they are as teachers, allowing each to inform and enrich the other.

This is a core focus in Phase II of the work, ‘Teachers as Readers: Building Communities of Readers’, which seeks to support teachers’ development as ‘Reading Teachers: teachers who read and readers who teach’ (Commeyras et al, 2003, p.3). Specifically Phase II aims to:

- develop children’s pleasure in reading
- extend teachers’ subject knowledge of children’s literature
- enhance teachers’ confidence and skilful use of such literature in the classroom
- develop teachers’ relationships with parents, carers, librarians and families.

This work, funded by the Esmee Fairbairn Foundation, involves a new UKLA research team supporting the five Local Authorities involved: Barking and Dagenham, Birmingham, Kent, Medway and Suffolk and documenting teacher case studies in each context. The work seeks to build upon the Phase I findings and consolidate and extend the links between schools, communities and local authorities working together to promote reading for purpose and pleasure. The teachers will be engaged in self study of themselves as readers and as readers who teach, and will be engaged in action research in their classrooms. It is hoped that through this work, undertaken during the National Year of Reading, those involved will learn more about the potential significance of the teacher as an active, engaged and informed reader in the primary phase. It is further hoped that
genuine reciprocal reading relationships with children will be created, relationships which may impact significantly upon children achieving their maximum entitlement (Martin, 2003) and becoming readers for life.

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