

# Reading for pleasure: Creating impactful social reading experiences



**In the chat, please share one idea or strategy that works for you when creating social reading experiences in your school or classroom?**



# Housekeeping

- We will be recording this webinar and will share it with you all afterwards
- We will also share these slides with you, so watch out for an email from us in your inbox in a couple of days
- Your microphone is muted, but please submit any questions in the Q&A or chat box and our panel will answer as many as they can



# Agenda

- Welcome and introduction
- Research on reading for pleasure and impactful social reading experiences from BookTrust's Lauren Bingham
- Discussion with Farhana Islam about her books and the role of social reading experiences in schools
- Discussion with Matt Finch and Charlotte Hacking on how they support social reading experiences in the classroom
- How Bookbuzz Primary can help cultivate a culture of reading for pleasure in your school



# Reading for Pleasure at KS2: Creating impactful social reading experiences

21 April 2026



# Context of reading enjoyment at Key Stage 2

Our research shows that children's reading enjoyment declines between the ages of 7 and 11

*"Love reading": by age (1)*



**KS2 Teachers:**



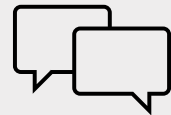
**63%** of Key Stage 2 teachers told us that they are concerned about their pupil's overall level of reading enjoyment. (2)

Our recent survey highlighted that almost **7 in 10 teachers (69%)** are seeking additional resources and/or support for reading for pleasure. (3)

# Social reading experiences: what are they?

**Social participation in reading is the practice of interacting with others around a reading-based activity or topic**

For children, this involves embedding reading within 'socially rich experiences' such as **within conversations with peers or with trusted adults**



**Informal book talk**



**Peer recommendations**



**A welcoming and book-friendly classroom**

# Social interactions around reading support children's reading motivation and peer relationships

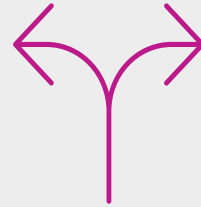
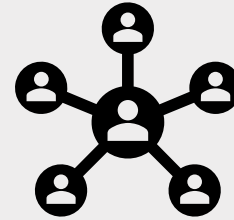
Opportunities for social interaction around texts are one of the **central pillars of reading motivation** (5), a useful tool for **encouraging children's 'intrinsic motivation' to read.**

When children are given space to engage in informal book discussions, they are more likely to view **reading as a socially valued part of school life** (5).

**Connection with books and reading**



**Connection with peers**



**Social reading experiences**

Shared reading and whole-class book gifting help foster a **collective reading identity and sense of belonging among pupils.**

Peer interactions boost engagement particularly important at KS2 **when social approval becomes more important in shaping identity and interest**

(7)

# Social reading experiences enable children to...

## Be part of something

- When reading feels *shared*, it becomes more meaningful
- Group read-alouds, book talk, and class events create a *sense of belonging*
- Children read not just *for themselves* but *with and for others*.



Connection fuels motivation – we want to join what feels joyful

## 'See it to be it'

- Reading becomes accepted through *observation* and *imitation* (peer modelling)
- When classmates recommend books or show excitement, it signals that reading *matters*
- These visible behaviours become *social cues* – “people like me read.”



Over time, reading becomes an *internalised norm*

## Experience shared feelings

- Stories connect us through *shared feeling*
- Laughing at a line, gasping at a twist, or crying together at a scene builds *emotional memory*
- Reading becomes tied to *joy, empathy, and human connection*.



Collective emotion deepens engagement with reading

# Embedding social reading experiences into the design of our new programme at KS2

Bookbuzz Primary is a programme designed to **help primary schools facilitate social reading experiences for KS2 pupils.**

It does this by creating:

- **Opportunities for book talk**
- **Collective moments of excitement**
- **Whole class engagement**

The programme also brings in other elements which we know from the research evidence supports reading enjoyment and engagement such as choice.

*"I know that lots of children are planning to swap books as well. So that once they finish with their book, they're going to swap over with their friends, which we like because we don't often see that.*

*If they carry on with their normal book choices across the year, that's going to be really useful because it shows...they're not just reading because they have to read. They're actually reading because they want to read."*

- Year 6 teacher, Reach Academy, Feltham

# Seeing this in action: working with schools



# What is Bookbuzz Primary?

Bookbuzz Primary supports Key Stage 2 children to develop reading for pleasure and book choice skills by picking a book to take home and keep from a selection of 16 diverse and inclusive titles.



1. Your launch pack arrives in September with two copies of each book.



2. Pupils make their choices and you send them to us.

With online and print resources to support each step of the programme.



3. We send each pupil's choice to you, ready for them to take home and enjoy.

# What next?

If you want to find out more about Bookbuzz Primary...

**Book a call**



If you would like to receive an evaluation pack with four Bookbuzz Primary books...

**Request a pack**



Join us on 2<sup>nd</sup> June for our next Reading for Pleasure in KS2 webinar on empowering pupils through book choice...

**Register now**



The slides will be shared by email.

Check our website and socials on 7<sup>th</sup> May to see the 16 Bookbuzz Primary books including *The Misadventures of Mina Mahmood*

