

DESCRIPTION OF SUCCESSFUL READING PROGRAMME <b>PROGRAMME TITLE: Reading Schools</b> [As part of the "ALL OF EUROPE READS TO KIDS PROGRAMME"] <b>PROGRAMME ORGANISER(S): The ABCXXI "All of Poland Reads to Kids" Foundation</b>	
Description Created by LiRe Partner Institution: CARDET	
Time & Place	Target Group(s)
2011 Poland	Numerous schools for diverse ages across Poland The study summarized here collected data from 8 kindergarten classes, 8 primary school classes, and six middle school classes
Short Description (Max. 200 words)	
<p>The core of the programme was teachers reading aloud daily to students at school, for sheer pleasure, so that children associated reading with joy and curiosity. Teachers of kindergartens, primary and secondary schools, along with technical and vocational schools introduced at school the 'simple' or 'mixed mode' of the programme. In 'simple mode', the teacher read to students every day for 15-20 minutes during the class at a fixed time. It was recommended to read at the beginning of the first lesson. Books should be truly interesting to students, so teachers were encouraged to select them together with students. In the 'Mixed mode', the teacher started the school day with ten minutes of reading aloud to the students and another ten minutes were spent on silent reading at the end of the day. Students, teachers and members of the school staff silently read their own books. The mixed mode took into account the important factor of setting an example by the adults who read books themselves. This variant was considered more appropriate for the higher grades of primary schools and for secondary school, after completing at least one semester of reading aloud to students according to the simple mode.</p>	
Objectives (General & Specific)	
<p>The programme had the following objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- improving language skills, increasing the understanding of texts and instructions;</li> <li>- developing thinking skills;</li> <li>- improving concentration, lengthening attention span;</li> <li>- developing memory and imagination;</li> <li>- improving the level of pupils' speaking and writing skills;</li> <li>- encouraging a desire and readiness to learn</li> <li>- increasing pupils' ability to reflect and to think critically;</li> <li>- developing emotional intelligence;</li> <li>- improving pupils' self-esteem;</li> <li>- improving mutual relations between pupils;</li> <li>- creating bonds between teachers and pupils;</li> <li>- decreasing the amount of anti-social and delinquent behavior;</li> <li>- increasing the involvement of parents in reading to children at home;</li> <li>- increasing readership</li> </ul>	
Scheme of Reading Promotion Actions & Activities	

The following are the 'rules' applied during the programme.

**Universal rules:**

- We read always create an atmosphere of enthusiasm and delight over a child reading a book
- It is good to choose one specific time during the day to establish the habit of daily reading
- We always read with the pleasure for the child at the forefront of our minds. It is not a punishment or an obligation -the aim is to permanently associate reading with pleasure
- We choose books which are interesting for children and appropriate for their age and stage of development-we should take into account their reactions
- We protect the child's sensitivity -we should not instil anxieties and fears
- We adjust the amount of time spent on reading to the attention span of a child – we start from a couple of minutes

**At school:**

- arranging a fixed time for reading everyday
- modes: 20 minutes of reading by a teacher or 10 minutes of reading by a teacher in the morning and 10 minutes at the end of the school day when everyone reads on their own, including teachers and a school staff
- books selected to read should not be included in the compulsory canon, should be always interesting, can be suggested by children
- reading is not graded, the conversation after reading is important, optionally-drawing for younger children
- it is worth installing bookshelves in the room

**Not Recommended:** Reading aloud before lessons begin, during breaks or after the lessons ends may actually discourage students to participate in the programme. If they are forced to come earlier to school or give up their free time in order to participate in the read aloud session, they will dislike it. To do this would be contrary to the primary purpose of the programme, which is to associate reading with pleasure.

**Results / Indicators of Success**

The programme's research report lists the following, amongst many other positive conclusions:

- An increased amount of reading among children, as demonstrated by statistics gathered in school libraries, which clearly show that pupils from classes participating in the programme borrow more books per semester, on average, than classes that are not involved in the programme.
- A change in the attitude of children and adolescents toward books – books have become more important to them. Regular reading aloud led to both a greater interest in the content of books, and also to increased concern for the physical state of books.

- Increased commitment of parents to reading to young children at home, according to the reports of children and parents gathered by preschool teachers.
- The development of more sophisticated reading habits and taste, particularly in the case of middle-school students. According to reports by teachers and librarians, those participating in the programme have their own favourite literary genres and favourite authors, and their reading preferences are extremely varied.
- An improvement in mutual relations between pupils. While being read to aloud, children also learn to communicate with each other which is shown by the fact that they are less inclined to interrupt others during discussions. Teachers working in classes where reading aloud was being practised on a regular basis also noticed this effect. In addition, teachers said that they noticed a decrease in aggression and anti-social behaviour among children.
- The formation of closer relations and emotional bonds between the teachers who read aloud and the pupils listening to them, as reported by teachers participating in the programme.

## CONCLUSIONS

(WHAT WORKED WELL AND WHY)

The research conducted seems to show that the effects of carrying out the programme were facilitated by the following factors:

- Starting to read to children at an early stage of their development.
- Reading systematically.
- Selecting books on the basis of age suitability and graphic appeal.
- Conducting discussions on the read text, so that listeners have a chance to share their emotions and impressions about the passage they have heard with others.
- Selecting a reader with an appropriate personality - a warm person who inspires trust and provides a feeling of security achieves the programme's aims most effectively.
- The child's health and wellbeing, which depends on his/her good psychological and physical state (when the child is healthy, well-rested and well-nourished).
- Agreeable conditions for reading – best effects are achieved in a place associated with quiet and concentration, where one can sit comfortably.
- A specific atmosphere which allows the reader to feel moved or enraptured without constraint.
- Access to books which children are interested in, in the classroom and in the school library.
- The commitment of teachers and other workers at the schools. The interviews conducted with teachers show that the programme naturally fits into the work of



kindergartens and into the work of younger classes in elementary schools. The Introduction of the programme in older elementary-school classes and in middle schools, however, requires changing the attitude of teachers, who are often not convinced about the sense of reading aloud to older children.

- Cooperation with parents and encouraging them to read aloud to their children frequently and systematically at home.

#### REFERENCES

The “All of Poland Reads to Kids” website: <http://www.allofpolandreadstokids.org/>

#### LINKS TO FURTHER MATERIAL

Report about “All of Europe Reads to Kids” published in an on-line journal:  
[http://www.reading-worldwide.de/zeigen\\_e.html?seite=9305](http://www.reading-worldwide.de/zeigen_e.html?seite=9305)

