



DESCRIPTION OF SUCCESSFUL READING PROGRAMME PROGRAMME TITLE: Reading with the Big Boys [As part of the “Reading Champions” Programme] PROGRAMME ORGANISER(S): Brewood CE Middle School & National Literacy Trust	
Description Created by LiRe Partner Institution: CARDET	
Time & Place	Target Group(s)
2011 Stafford, UK	Pupils at Brewood CE Middle School and near-by Primary Schools
Short Description (Max. 200 words)	
<p>Year 8 boys at Brewood CE Middle School in Stafford worked wonders as reading role models for pupils at local primary schools, through an innovative <i>Reading Champions</i> buddying project. The buddying project was born following a series of meetings, which looked at enhancing reading experiences, re-engaging specific Year 8 boys and supporting the transition process between primary schools and the secondary school where children continue their education. Year 8 boys visit these primary schools and interact with younger children; some are doing individual reading, some are reading with small groups and some are storytelling. They all discuss books, characters and genres and encourage reading for enjoyment. The older boys take notes so they can remember the activities they have completed with the younger pupils and make a note of their interests. They find resources in their school library on the children’s interests to further engage with the younger pupils. The boys meet in their school library every Friday lunchtime and discuss their plans for that afternoon before leaving for the primary schools. They return to school afterwards to meet again in the library to talk about how their sessions went and share good practice.</p>	
Objectives (General & Specific)	
<p>Objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Enhancing younger and older students’ reading experiences - Re-engaging specific Year 8 boys - Supporting the transition process between primary school and the specific secondary school where children continue their education 	
Scheme of Reading Promotion Actions & Activities	
<p>Step 1 – Getting Institutional Support</p> <p>Study Support Coordinator, Sallie Cornes, first participated in discussions with the Headteacher of Brewood CE Middle School and the Community and Learning Partnership Co-ordinator. A plan was then drawn up to arrange venue, costs and timetable. Cornes attended a Partnership Headteachers’ meeting to gain support and the project proposal was discussed with their Key Stage Three Co-ordinator. She managed to secure funding for the project from their Community and Learning Partnership.</p> <p>Step 2 – Selecting the “Big Boys”</p> <p>The boys were chosen for a variety of reasons, some because they had not been chosen for a specific responsibility before, some who were known to be more reluctant readers and others who were anticipated to be enthusiastic about the project. 19 boys were personally invited to attend a meeting, which was hosted in the school library with squash and biscuits. Cornes explained the initiative and encouraged them to take part. Without exception, all 19</p>	



boys were keen to join in and a training session was arranged.

Step 3 – Training

Cornes attended a course led by Sarah De Zoysa from the National Literacy Trust, to gain ideas for inspiring and coaching the boys. The boys' training session included ideas gained from the course. Cornes was supported by a Teaching Assistant who had primary experience, worked as part-time Librarian at the school and was responsible for accompanying the boys to the primary schools.

Step 4 – Weekly Visits

The selected Year 8 boys were allowed to choose the school they wanted to work with. Most of them selected the school they had previously attended. They were taken by minibus to the primary schools every Friday afternoon.

At the primary schools some students were doing individual reading, some reading with small groups and some storytelling. They all discussed books, characters and genres and encouraged reading for enjoyment. The boys all had a notebook and pen to make notes so they could remember the activities they had completed with the younger pupils and make a note of their interests. The students found resources in the school library on the children's interests to further engage with the younger pupils.

The boys met in the school library every Friday at lunchtime and discussed their plans for that afternoon before leaving for the primary schools. They returned to school afterwards to meet again in the library to talk about how their sessions went and share good practice. The "What went well and what could go even better next week?" discussions encouraged the boys to review their own learning.

Step 5 – Raising the Profile of Reading

The participating Year 8 boys led a school assembly to inform their peers about their role as Reading Champions, to raise the profile of reading and to encourage year seven pupils to take over the following year. A badge was allocated to each boy, in recognition of what they were doing. The boys also launched a "Caught Reading" competition and worked with Cornes to complete a display of photos in the school library to encourage new pupils to visit the library.

Step 6 – Feedback

Cornes received feedback from both primary and secondary school staff and pupils.

Results / Indicators of Success

- Lending from the school library at Brewood CE Middle School increased since the Year 8 boys became role models for the younger children.
- Many of the boys gained renewed enthusiasm towards their studies.
- There had been a reduction in the number of behaviour incidents amongst the boys who were involved in this project.
- One Year 8 Reading Champion said, "I feel emotional when I am helping the younger boys



with their reading as I am helping them with something they can't do".

- A pupil receiving support from a Reading Champion said, "I look forward to the big boys coming to our school to read with me and am disappointed if I don't get a turn". Another one reports: "I love reading with the older boys – it's better than anything else I do".
- Staff at the primary schools see the project as a wonderful initiative. One teacher commented, "The boys are wonderful with the younger children and they are great role models to the whole class. Their encouragement and enthusiasm with the readers is fantastic".

CONCLUSIONS

(WHAT WORKED WELL AND WHY)

- Programmes like "Reading with the Big Boys," can effectively engage older children and "Reading Champions"/role models for younger children.
- In this case, the fact that the reading champions were all older boys probably contributed to the successful engagement of younger boys in reading as well; in many countries statistics indicate that most reluctant readers are boys.
- Interaction with older boys/reading champions fosters an enjoyment of reading and improves reading ability and confidence in young children.
- At the same instance, the whole process supported younger pupils' transition to secondary school.
- These projects have positive effects on the older children as well, since for the Year 8 boys it has been an opportunity to learn new skills, inspire peers and increase their own self-esteem.
- In general, such projects raise the profile of reading and contribute to the formation of reading cultures.

REFERENCES

Case study - Reading with the big boys. Downloaded from :

http://www.literacytrust.org.uk/partners_in_literacy/case_studies/filter/boys%20literacy

LINKS TO FURTHER MATERIAL

Homepage of the National Literacy Trust: <http://www.literacytrust.org.uk/>