Arnside National School Core Reading Books (Reading Spine)

In order to access, understand and interpret texts effectively, leading to enjoyment of books, children need to be familiar with a variety of different structures. Doug Lemov, in his book 'Reading Reconsidered', has described the potential barriers to understanding literature as 5 'plagues'. If children are taught to enjoy and understand these 'plagues' at all levels, from Nursery through to Year 6, they will be better prepared for the reading of more complex texts at secondary school and thrive as competent readers. Armed with the skills to be able to access and interpret texts, children are more likely to enjoy reading and be able to interpret texts, which are the fundamental aims of our Intent for Reading in Arnside National School.

We have worked together to compile a reading spine, 'Core Reading Books' that will revisit the 5 plagues throughout the school, with texts becoming increasingly complex as the children progress. Each class will have a list of high-quality texts that the children will study to develop their reading skills. Other high-quality texts will be used in addition to the spine across the curriculum to develop a broad culture of reading.

What are the 5 types of text (Plagues)?

Archaic Texts – The vocabulary, usage, syntax and context for cultural reference of texts over 50 or 100 years old are vastly different and typically more complex than texts written today. Students need to be exposed to and develop proficiency with antiquated forms of expression to be able to hope to read Charles Dickens, Shakespeare and other such authors in the future.

Beatrix Potter's Peter Rabbit (EYFS) - *"Peter gave himself up for lost, and shed big tears; but his sobs were overheard by some friendly sparrows, who flew to him in great excitement, and implored him to exert himself."*

Non-Linear Texts - A story is often narrated in a particular style with a given cadence which endures and remains consistent, but in the best books, books where every aspect of the narration is nuanced to create an exact image, time moves in fits and start. It doubles back with 'flash-backs'.

In the book 'Holes' by Louis Sachar (Y6), the story shifts from the present-day story of Stanley based at 'Camp Green Lake', to the story of his great-great-grandfather. The stories eventually interweave and become one. Complex Narrative - Books are sometimes narrated by an unreliable narrator, so the account in the story is missing elements or have been misunderstood.

Warhorse by Michael Morpurgo (Y4/5). The horse is the narrator, so the reader has to use their knowledge of the war to understand the nuances of the story.

Symbolic Texts (Complex Plot) - Texts which happen on a figurative or symbolic level, with metaphors or imagery being used to create powerful stories.

The Iron Man by Ted Hughes (Y3/4) is a metaphorical story that comments on how humans accept difference.

Eric by Shaun Tann (Y6) deals with the concept of being an 'outsider' on a symbolic level.

Resistant Texts - Texts written to deliberately resist easy meaning-making by readers. Perhaps half of the poems ever written fall into this category. Meaning has to be assembled around nuances, hints, uncertainties and clues.

The poem, Jabberwocky by Lewis Carroll (Y6) have nonsense words which impair the reader, but the story can be decoded to make some sort of sense!

The Pedagogy: Children will be taught to read independently to themselves and aloud to others; skim and scan for words and phrases to provide evidence and make links; summarise and paraphrase effectively; understand the impact of grammar choices that the author has made; make inferences and deductions from the text; look for patterns, key moments and repetitions in the text and develop a wide and varied vocabulary. Children will be taught to annotate texts to reference interesting points and to evidence the area of reading they are studying. We use the Reading Vipers from The Literacy Shed throughout the school to develop the comprehension skills and to categorise the text dependent questions.