

AHMAT World Book Day 2023

The ability to read is a fundamental life skill and instilling reading for pleasure amongst pupils is essential to promote enjoyment across the subject which in turn supports learning in other curriculum areas. With this in mind, we wanted to provide our pupils with an engaging, well-structured World Book Day event to spark and reignite a love for reading.



Aim of the Event

Reading continues to be a focus in all AHMAT schools with reading incentives being regularly checked and rewarded. Whilst this is a fantastic way to promote a subject, pupils can be further inspired through whole school events. World Book Day 2023 intended to give pupils the chance to be exposed to teachers' own passion for the subject of reading as well as the opportunity to engage in workshops with authors and a myriad of cross-trust and cross-school reading activities.

Overview of Activities

Over the course of a week there were several workshops for Key Stage 2 pupils, both virtual and in-person with authors and illustrators provided by the Maidenhead Big Read. On Thursday 2nd March, there were a numerous activities taking place to celebrate reading for all year groups and phases. Each of these are detailed below.

World Book day Assembly

The day kicked off across AHMAT with a World Book Day assembly. Pupils and teachers were able to show off their creative costumes to the whole school and the participation was excellent. This created a fantastic atmosphere and encouraged pupils to engage in meaningful discussion. Pupils talked about the first book they remembered reading, they pondered over their favourite authors, they

they debated where they like to read and also what kind of stories they enjoy reading the most. The questions they had been discussing were then answered via video links by current authors and illustrators. It is vital that pupils can relate to authors and understand that they all have the ability and potential to aspire to create their own stories on the same level. Authors and illustrators that were listened to included Pippa Goodheart, Nick Sharratt and A. M. Dassu. This assembly set the tone for the rest of the day and pupils were brimming with excitement to get started!



World Book Day 2023: Pippa Goodheart and Nick Sharratt on the first book they remember enjoying

Story Relay

Across the trust, all year groups engaged in a story relay. A timetable was created and each phase (Foundation, Year 1/2, Year 3/4, and Year 5/6) worked to create a story themed around friendship. One class per phase would begin by writing their section as a shared write. This would then be passed on to the next class on the timetable which then meant the story took some interesting twists and turns as it progress. Year 2 at White Waltham began the year one and two story relay and whilst we had many ideas about the way the story might end, we were delighted to read the final story at the end of the day which was very different to what was expected! Pupil's vocalised that they "didn't expect that to happen!" and that "there were some amazing ideas" included that we hadn't thought of within our own class.



The story relay really showed pupils the value of collaboration and the beauty of creativity when working as a team. Each story relay has been displayed with illustrations and a story title in all AHMAT schools. Next year, I would like to consider the possibility of taking this activity further, giving pupils the opportunity to rehearse and retell their story section including role play and then performing it.

Treasure Hunt

A real high point during the day was when pupils completed the book character treasure hunt. Around each school, a range of book characters were hidden around the grounds with a letter on the back which created an anagram of 'World Book Day'. The benefits of taking learning outside of the classroom are huge. Research has suggested that outdoor learning boosts confidence, social skills, communication, motivation, physical skills, knowledge and understanding. It has also been found to boost children's self-esteem, self-confidence, ability to work cooperatively and positive attitude to learning. It was heart-warming to see pupils working together across year groups to locate the hidden characters and discussing where they

knew each character from and if they had read the story.



Round – Robin Story Time

The round-robin story time allowed pupils to listen to different teachers reading snippets of their favourite stories. Modelled reading is imperative to supporting pupils on the journey to develop their own fluency and expression when independently reading. It also demonstrates that *everyone* within their school environment is an enthusiastic reader and role-model to aspire to. In each story time session, pupils engaged in discussion about the story, carefully scaffolded by the teacher to focus on a variety of reading skills such as predicting, inferring, sequencing, retrieval and vocabulary. After this activity, several teachers asked pupils to complete a book review of their favourite story they listened to, encouraging them to form their own honest opinions and thoughts.

Dressing Up

The highlight of our World Book Day celebration was the fantastic effort given by both staff and pupils to dressing up as well-loved book characters. This year, pupils were encouraged to bring in the book containing the character they were dressed up as which helped to guide their choices. Across the trust, the participation was excellent amongst both staff and pupils with the following pictures showcasing some of the imaginative costumes.



Dressing Up! Cont.



Author Workshops – Maidenhead Big Read

We were very fortunate to experience three separate workshops provided by the Maidenhead Big Read.

The first was on Monday 6th March virtually with Polly Ho-Yen for all of Key Stage 2. Polly prides herself in being 'passionate about writing that is rooted in reality and looks and feels like the world that young readers know and experience.'

(<https://www.pollyhoyen.com/>)

Polly's workshop encouraged pupils to use doodling as a way of finding and creating a story by unlocking the richness of everyday experiences to inform creativity.



Feedback from pupils and teachers was exceptional and day-long conversations could be heard regarding the workshop and the inspiration Polly had created for writing and using doodles as a starting point.

Author Workshops – Maidenhead Big Read

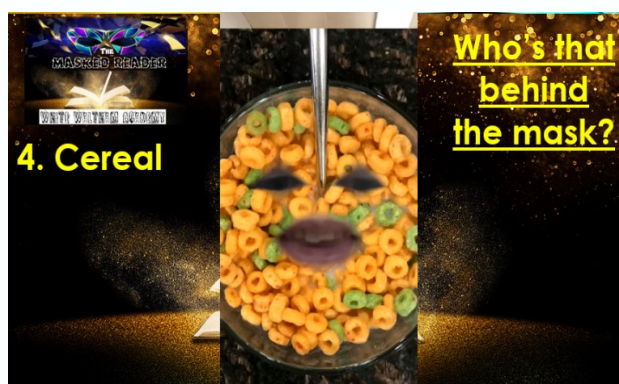
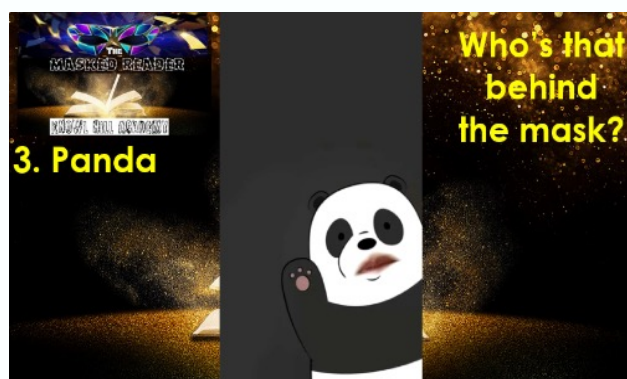
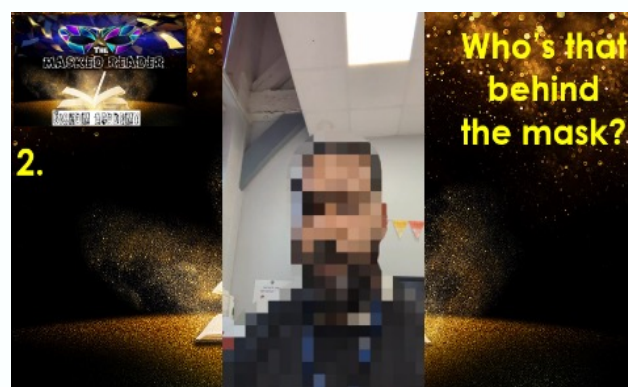
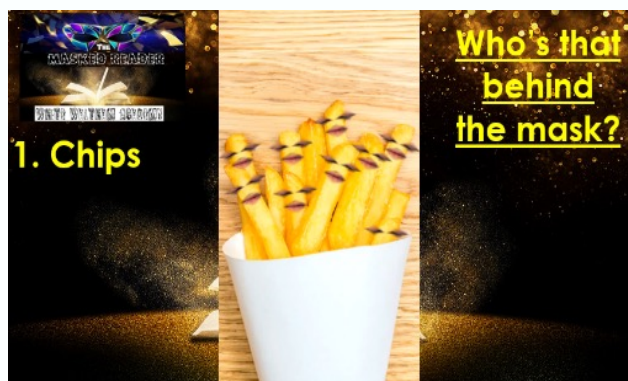
On Wednesday 8th March, Key Stage 2 at Knowl Hill had a visit from Kate Poels. Kate's session gave pupils an insight into some of the stories she had written, such as 'Pie-Rats', and how to create a plot. She also shared character and setting ideas before equipping pupils with the knowledge to begin creating their own enabling them to take this further after the session had finished. The pupils then had an opportunity to purchase copies of a selection of Kate's books in a mini book sale. This experience in itself enables pupils to see and experience that authors are everywhere and are real people, rather than just a name that appears on the front cover of a book.



The final workshop was on Thursday 9th March at White Waltham for Year 5 and 6 with Iszi Lawrence. This was a particularly special workshop as Iszi Lawrence's book 'Billie Swift takes Flight' is set in White Waltham! Her workshop gave pupils ideas and knowledge about how to write historical fiction. The classes then moved on to create a brand new story set in the past. Pupils were inspired to use real life events with quirky adaptations in their own story.

Masked Reader

A final feature of the day was 'The Masked Reader' quiz. Pupils thoroughly enjoyed guessing which teacher was 'behind the mask' after listening to disguised videos of staff members reading a snippet of a book. Sometimes, even voices were disguised, making the guessing even trickier! On the playground, conversations after this activity continued as pupils swapped thoughts on which reader they guessed was behind each mask.



Impact Statement

Overall, the day was a huge success which has left lasting memories with all pupils. Pupils across the trust expressed how they had thoroughly enjoyed all activities throughout the day. The importance of celebrating World Book Day needs to be appreciated and after the event, some pupils expressed their understanding of this saying “it is important to celebrate books and stories and think about all the authors who have worked hard for us to read” (Brody and Riley, White Waltham). Here are some comments from pupils at White Waltham stating their favourite parts of the day.

I love reading
'Red, Red, Red'.
It's a rhyming
story, I got it from
the library.

Riley

The treasure hunt
was so much fun. I
loved going outside
and working with a
partner.

Riley

Roald Dahl and David
Walliams are my
favourite. Roald Dahl is
really creative. David
Walliams does lots of
different types of
writing.

Holly

The masked
reader was
hilarious!

Holly

I enjoyed listening
to stories. It was
nice hearing other
teachers read.

Brody

We designed book
covers and I felt like
I was the author.

Finley

Liz Pichon inspired
me. When I was
younger I used to
always do doodles.
When I started
reading them I liked
the doodles.

Rex

In our classes we
made bookmarks, it
was nice to have
something to keep.

Rex

I loved dressing up
as our characters
and pretending to
be them.

Jana