



“
56% of teachers do not feel they have enough time to share and talk about books in the classroom
”

Best-selling author Michael Morpurgo calls for more time for great stories



Research reveals teachers' concerns around reading for pleasure in the classroom

New research from Oxford University Press

- More than half of UK primary school teachers (56%) don't have enough time for books in the classroom
- Over a third of teachers (36%) want more time to dedicate to reading and books
- OUP publishes new educational series 'TreeTops Greatest Stories' to introduce children to the joy of reading classics and our worldwide literary heritage

Oxford University Press (OUP) has announced the findings of recent educational research into 'Reading for Pleasure' in UK primary schools.

The survey, carried out by OUP as part of its ongoing research programme, reveals that more than half of UK primary school teachers (56%) say that they don't have enough time to share and talk about books in the classroom, and that more than a third (36%) believe that having more time to dedicate to reading and to books would make the biggest difference to promoting a love of reading in their school.

OUP research also demonstrates the importance that teachers place on classic stories. 93% of the teachers surveyed agreed that having access

to classic stories was vital to develop a love of reading. Refreshingly, many teachers were inspired themselves by these stories as a child and now use them to teach the next generation of school children with Roald Dahl and fairy tales demonstrating particular appeal.

Despite almost all teachers (92%) believing that reading for pleasure is essential for a pupil's future success, 63% said that they thought only half or fewer of their pupils read for pleasure outside of class time. The research also showed that for many current teachers it was their own childhood teacher who inspired their love of reading – highlighting the importance of reading for pleasure in the classroom.

“For many children it is their teacher who will be the first to try to engage children with stories. The best of them – and there are many - tell the stories they love, tell them with a passion. However, we have to make this possible; we need to give them the time they need to enjoy stories, poetry and literature - particularly in the early years.”

Michael Morpurgo, former Children's Laureate and award-winning author of *War Horse*



“
92% of teachers believe reading for pleasure is essential for a pupil's future success
 ”

Jane Harley, Strategy Director for UK Education at OUP, added: *“This research shows that teachers are concerned about children missing out on the chance to be inspired by reading in the classroom. There is clear evidence that the primary school years are crucial for children, whatever their social or cultural background to develop their love of reading. It is vital that teachers are able to dedicate the time to helping their pupils engage with stories in the classroom and to create more space for quality conversations about books.”*

As part of its commitment to developing the reading experience for all children in the classroom, OUP has published *Greatest Stories* - a series of 35 books in OUP's TreeTops series in May 2016; a timeless collection that aims to capture European and worldwide literary heritage with classic stories, handpicked by Michael Morpurgo and retold by well-known children's authors including Gillian Cross and Anne Fine. Titles include *The Lambton Worm, Icarus, Sleeping Beauty, Pinocchio, Thumbelina, Peter and the Wolf, Tales from Ovid, Around the World in 80 Days, The Snow Queen, Moby Dick, Emma, and Great Expectations*.

Advisor for the *Greatest Stories* series Professor Kim Reynolds, Newcastle University says: *“It's time to reclaim some of these great stories and fairy tales that had been put to the back of the school library. We have called this series ‘The Greatest Stories’ because they are of great importance to a child's*

ability to develop and navigate the world. These are stories that children need to know. They are cultural reference points that bind generations.”

Michael Morpurgo says: *“It is vital that all of us have access to the powerful classic stories, retellings and fairy tales*

that have inspired generations. These are the stories that we need to know to negotiate life, culture and the world around us. They are the cultural reference points and social glue, giving us the knowledge, empathy and understanding we need to lead useful, fulfilled lives. They are also quite simply, great stories.”

FIND OUT MORE

- 1 This research was conducted by Oxford University Press's market research team from 29th April 2016 to 13th May 2016 with 349 teachers in the UK. For the full report, please contact Harriet Bayly at harriet.bayly@oup.com
- 2 To find out more about our latest series, *TreeTops Greatest Stories*, please visit our website: www.oxfordprimary.co.uk/ttgreateststories
- 2 For resources and support around Reading for Pleasure, please visit: www.oxfordprimary.co.uk/readingforpleasure

About Oxford University Press

Oxford University Press (OUP) is a department of the University of Oxford. It furthers the University's objective of excellence in research, scholarship, and education by publishing worldwide. OUP is the world's largest university press with the widest global presence. It currently publishes thousands of new publications a year, has offices in around fifty countries, and employs nearly 7,000 people worldwide. It has become familiar to millions through a diverse publishing programme that includes scholarly works in all academic disciplines, bibles, music, school and college resources, children's books, materials for teaching English as a foreign language, business books, dictionaries and reference books, and academic journals.