Reading Newsletter

Spring 2024

World Book Week

At Strand, we love to celebrate reading so this was an exciting week. On World Book Day itself, children and staff arrived in costumes as their favourite fictional character or ready to 'Get Cosy and Read'. Each year group had a different picture book which inspired some lovely activities and there was lots of time throughout the day spent passing on recommendations of favourite books. During the week, we were also treated to two brilliant author visits.

Katya Balen

Swan were inspired by some indoor mudlarking to create imaginative stories based on the objects they had found and later the whole school discovered what it takes to get a book published.

Iona Rangeley

Years 3 & 4 giggled at the ridiculous antics of some very funny penguins and very generously gave Iona some ideas for her next book!

Both authors said that reading as a child was where they got their inspiration to become authors so make sure you try as wide a variety of books as possible.

Poet of the Term

Joshua Seigal writes and performs poetry for all ages. He has worked in hundreds of schools, libraries and festivals around the world and written and performed for BBC television. His most famous poem is probably 'I Don't Like Poetry', from the book of the same name. We have some of his books on display by the library.

I Don't Like Poetry

I don't like similes.
Every time I try to think of one
my brain feels like a vast, empty desert;
my eyes feel like raisins floating in an ocean;
my fingers feel like sweaty sausages.

I don't like metaphors.
Whenever I attempt them
a hammer starts beating in my chest;
lava starts bubbling in my veins;
zombies have a fight in my stomach.

I don't like alliteration.
We learnt about it in school
but it's seriously, stupendously silly;
definitely drastically difficult;
terribly, troublingly tricky.

I don't like onomatopoeia.
I wish I could blow it up
with a ZAP! and a BANG! and a CRASH!;
a BOOM! and a CLANG! and a POW!;
a CLASH! and a BAM! and a THUD!

And I don't like repetition
I don't like repetition
I don't like repetition...

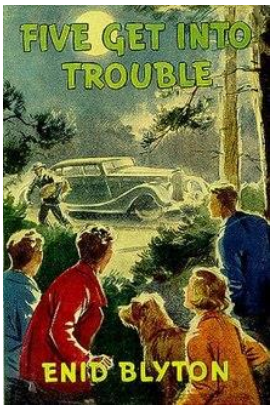
Year 6 Reading Week

During the February half term holiday, Year 6 took part in a reading week focusing on the Famous Five books by Enid Blyton. A huge number of issues can be explored through these historical pieces which provide a snapshot of a very different place and time. If you get a moment, chat to them and hear their views on some of the attitudes displayed in the books.

These weeks are a Year 6 rite of passage and part of preparing for Year 7. There is another reading week now and they will be bringing home a range of books over the Easter holidays.

There are 21 books in total and each Year 6 was given one of the books to take home and read. We studied the use of older language such as the terms 'lashings of ginger beer' or 'by Jove!' which we found confusing at first but then we wrote a description of what the tricky terms meant including 'it is a rather spiffing day' or 'I say! It is rather beautiful'. We then went on to write our own version of a Famous Five adventure that took place on Oliver's Island. Our stories included how the Five travelled to there as well as an encounter with crooks, smugglers or kidnappers and a trip to the police station. The Five finally travelled back to Kirrin Cottage to be rewarded for their hard work of catching the criminals. Back then, Enid Blyton would've used the description of the boys - Julian and Dick - as stronger than any of the girls - Anne and George - and we all included it in our writing too although that's not true these days! There were some great tales to read and I think the teachers were very impressed with all our hard work! By Charlotte F

In my book, the Five were given the opportunity to go travelling to the countryside on their bikes. One night, when they went to find food, one character was kidnapped, having been mistaken for another child. I was honestly really interested in these books, because I have never read a mystery and adventure book before, and usually prefer comics instead. I've started to get more interested in other genres of books now and I am currently reading a book that focuses more on sticking out in a crowd, called 'Tyger'. We have a book to read over the Easter holidays and I hope that I enjoy it as much! In a nutshell, I really enjoyed reading week, and am looking forward to another one! By Kaha



#SpiritedScholarlySupportive

We all know that Strandites are the epitome of being spirited, scholarly and supportive. However, have you ever considered whether or not the characters we spend so much time reading about are? We want you to have a think about who fits the #spiritedscholarlysupportive bill when you are next reading and make nominations for title of most spirited, scholarly or supportive. Who will win the #scholarly crown? Will it be Matilda with her love of books and learning, or could it be Hermione Granger with her insatiable thirst for knowledge? On the other hand, are there any characters you know of who show a complete lack of these valuable traits? Send your nominations for most and least #spiritedscholarlysupportive and by the end of next term we will know which book characters could be an honorary Strandite (and who could do with a few lessons from us).

Win a prize in our “If I Were a Book…” competition

If I Were a Book written by José Jorge Letria and illustrated by André Letria celebrates the wonder and magic of books. We would like you to think about what books mean to you and what you would do if you were a book.

It could be that you would like to take people on a journey to another country without leaving their house or help them escape to a fantasy world full of impossible creatures. Let your creativity loose!

You can enter in one of two ways:

- Create a picture with a sentence beginning with 'If I were a book ...' and an illustration to represent it (like the page from the book shown above)

  or

- Write a story in a maximum of 500 words starting with ‘If I were a book…’

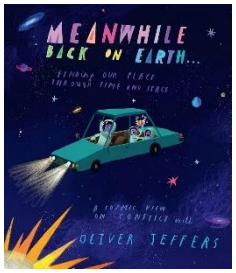
There is a task on Google Classroom that has lots more examples from the book if you need some inspiration. You can create your entry there or hand it to your teacher.

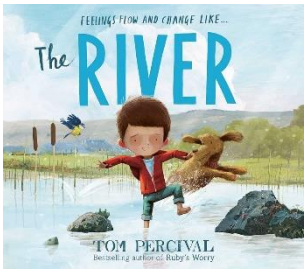
The closing date is Friday April 19th.

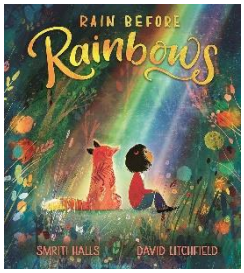
A Variety of Reading

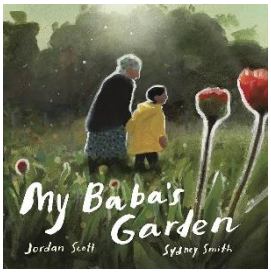
Here are some suggestions of the different ways to enjoy books. Click the images to open in Sora (instructions here if you need help logging in).

Picture Books

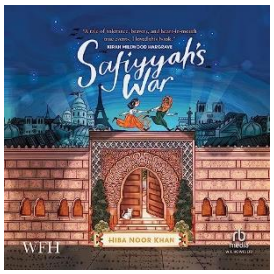


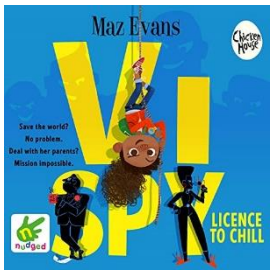




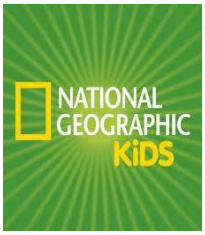


Audio Books

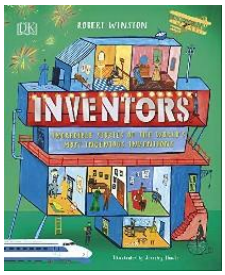


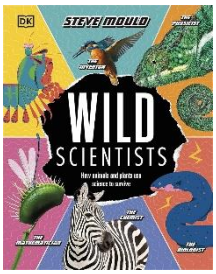


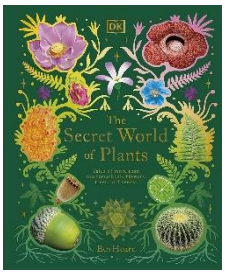
Magazines

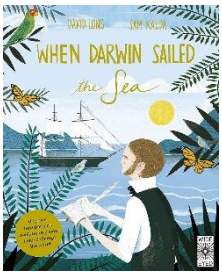


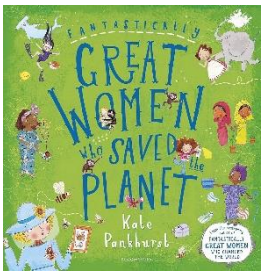
Non-fiction



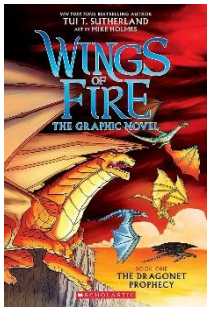


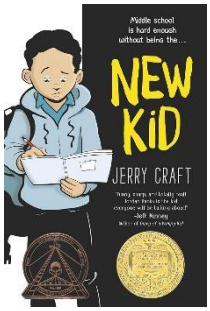


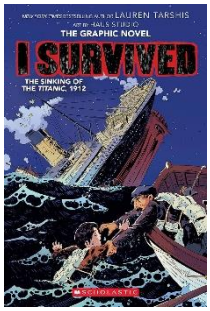


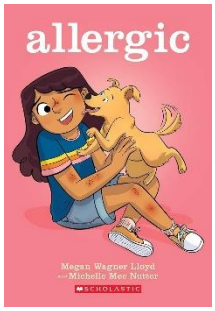


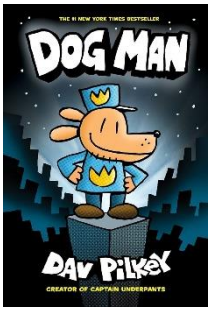
Graphic Novels

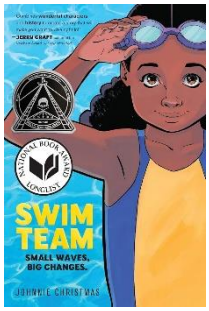












Turn on the Subtitles campaign

Turning on subtitles while children are watching TV can greatly improve their reading skills. A quick, simple, free way to make TV time, reading time. Click the image to find out more.

Author/Illustrator Visits

We hope you have enjoyed the recent author visits at school but who would you like to see next? Please send any suggestions to Mrs Jones.

In the meantime, keep your eyes open for the Barnes Children's Literature Festival. It is the biggest kids' book festival in the UK and it takes place just down the road. Last year they had over 100 events starring authors like Cressida Cowell, M.G Leonard, S.F. Said and Michael Morpurgo and this year's calendar will be announced shortly.

If you are looking for more inspiration, LoveReading4Kids has lots of brilliant recommendations in their Star Books or scroll through their Books of the Month. You get 10% off any books you buy from them while they contribute 25% for our school to get more books for our classroom shelves.