

## Class Libraries

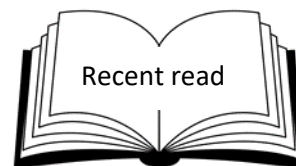
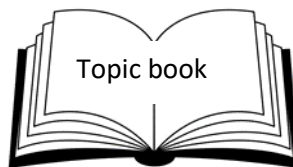
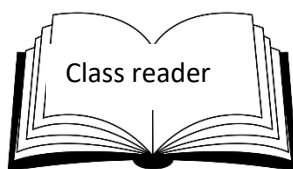
With our book corner/ class library competition in place I wanted to give a few tips and hints about what we would like to see and how you can make the most of your reading areas. These will look very different between the year groups and key stages but key elements should be evident in any class.

On reviewing the ofsted framework, here are some key points to have in mind:

1. The books themselves are the **most important** aspect of the book area. It should be the words of the stories and not the props that transport children to different worlds. Well chosen books should capture the children's imagination and engagement to the extent that they no longer realise they are sat on a beanbag or an ordinary chair in their classroom. Time is better spent selecting the correct books than excessively decorating it. However, saying that, as a school we would like to see book corners that are engaging and exciting to the children, rather than just book shelves. For the competition, both the inside and outside of the class library will be judged. It would be nice to have space for children to sit and read a book. This may be a chair, some bean bags, a teepee, pillows etc.
2. The more choice that is presented, the less chance that the child will engage. Rather than filling the book area with hundreds of books, select a handful of well-chosen books and ensure that the books are regularly rotated. Children should be involved in returning books to the main library so they can see they are being refreshed and replenished. Also consider having forward facing books as well as spine out like seen in a book shop.  
You will need books that fit in with your current topic as well as a few books from the previous term's topic. This is because we need to give children access to prior learning which will also help them to retain it throughout the year. You might also want to choose some books that are relevant to your class. For example, if your class are struggling with friendships, perhaps include some books that have friendship as a core theme.
3. Phonic programme books and AR level reading books do not need to be included in a reading area as children have access to these for their home reading and from our main library.
4. Every book in the book area must be worth reading out loud, the focus should be on what would make the biggest difference to the children's reading habits. We want to encourage a love of reading. It might be that a child picks up a story they have heard and can only retell the stories where others will be able to re-read themselves.

5. The book area should replicate a mini library, a place to browse books and to revisit books that have been read to them by their teacher. They will want to share books of common interest with their friends and it would be nice for you, as teaching staff, to also include books that you enjoy and can share with the children.
6. Current books that the children have listened to recently should be placed at their eye level.
7. You should include a selection of the children's favourite reads and topics from the previous year/ term. These should be placed on the lower shelves or in extra boxes.

So with all this in mind, here is a rough example of what a bookshelf layout might look like.



Books they have recently listened to/ books linked to current topic (Fiction and non-fiction)
Non- fiction – based on their hobbies and interest Poetry PSHE – age appropriate and class purposeful (e.g a diabetes book if you have a diabetic child in the class) religion diversity
Books they enjoyed last year/ term. Including previous topics as well as favourite story books Other reads – newspapers, comics, magazines, encyclopaedias

The area should provide somewhere for the children to sit and read, on a cushion/ beanbag or just a comfy chair. The area doesn't have to be completely closed off but should be a clear 'area.'

Yes, the area should still look pretty and inviting but try not to get too caught up in the aesthetics as this can then become overpowering. You are better off investing the time in books themselves and creating the reading space. Decorations are a nice extra but not the overall focus.

Have a look at Helen and Donna's year 1 reading area.



Favourite story left out with a story spoons and a board to be able to write or story map



somewhere tucked away to sit and read

I am in the library on a Thursday after school, and I am more than happy to help any of you search for any books that you may need. Also please let me know if there are any books within the main library that we are lacking that will help children with their learning and reading pleasure so that I

can try and source these. Your input with this is much appreciated as you know better than I do what the children are reading and need for their topics.