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***Uncovering power, access and belonging: Mixed methods case studies of learners' perspectives of
reading interventions at transition in a Scottish secondary school***

By

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for the degree of Doctor of Education**

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List of Abbreviations and Definitions

Abbreviation	Short for ...	Definition
ASRC	<i>After School Reading Club</i>	Intervention voluntarily attended by S1 pupils post transition. Also referred to as Pizza and Pages.
CfE	Curriculum for Excellence	Scotland's 3-18 curriculum
HMIE	Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education	Part of Education Scotland. The body responsible for standards in Scottish schools
LA	Local Authority	The local body responsible for the delivery of education
PEF	Pupil Equity Fund	Additional funding provided by Scottish Government directly to schools to close the poverty related attainment gap
PT	Principal Teacher	School-based middle management role
Q1-5	Quintile 1-5	A broader banding of the Scottish Index of Multiple deprivation
SIMD 1-10	Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation	Scale of deprivation in Scotland from 1 (most deprived) to 10 (least deprived)
<i>RWI</i>	<i>Read Write Inc</i>	Phonics intervention referring to <i>Read Write Inc: Fresh Start</i> aimed at older children
RfP	Reading for Pleasure	Reading undertaken for enjoyment with no attached accountability
SES	Socio-economic Status	A measure of the economic resources of a family
P1-7	Primary 1-7	The year group stages of primary schools in Scotland.
S1-6	Secondary 1-6	The year group stages of secondary schools in Scotland.
AifL	Assessment is for Learning	Assessment strategy promoting the use of formative assessment.

YARC	York Assessment of Reading Comprehension	Standardised assessment used in this study to generate quantitative baseline and exit data. Measures performance in comprehension, fluency, single word reading, reading rate and reading accuracy.,
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List of Tables and Figures

Tables

Table 1: Brief Description of Reading Interventions

Table 2: Summary of Interventions

Table 3: Summary of participant involvement in Reading Ambassadors

Table 4: Summary of participant involvement in Read Write Inc: Fresh Start

Table 5: Summary of participant involvement in the After School Reading Club

Table 6. Research questions with corresponding dataset, data collection tools and relation to research questions

Table 7. Emerging themes and sub-themes

Table 8. Purposes Supporting Qualitative Research in this study

Table 9. Interventions, Participants, and SIMD

Table 10. Summary of discussion pertaining to research questions

Figures

Figure 1. The Strathclyde 3 Domains Tool for literacy teaching and assessment

Figure 2. Process for identifying children for interventions based on individual needs

Figure 3. Andrew pre-intervention

Figure 4. Andrew post-intervention

Figure 5. Bree pre-intervention

Figure 6. Bree post-intervention

Figure 7. Cara pre-intervention

Figure 8. Cara post-intervention

Figure 9. Daniel pre-intervention

Figure 10. Daniel post-intervention

Figure 11. Erin pre-intervention

Figure 12. Erin post-intervention

Figure 13. Fern pre-intervention

Figure 14. Fern post intervention

Figure 15. The impact of attainment as the main driver of education in Scotland

List of Appendices

Appendix one - Letter home to parents

Appendix two - Local Authority consent

Appendix three - The Rights of the Reader

Appendix four - Interview questions

Appendix five – Interview transcripts

Appendix six - Frequency of utterances related to power, access and belonging

Abstract

Six children in a Scottish secondary school were asked about their experiences of three literacy interventions offered at the beginning of their secondary school career. The aim of this project was to ascertain the degree to which these interventions had an impact on participants' cognitive knowledge and skills, identity and agency, and social and cultural capital. The theoretical framework for this project is rooted in Pierre Bourdieu's theory of cultural and social capital (1973) and in the Strathclyde Three Domains Tool (Ellis & Smith 2017).

The project adopted a mixed methods case study approach. A constructivist stance was taken for data analysis and participants' responses were analysed in terms of power, access and belonging. Results show that each intervention offered different affordances as positive transition experiences.

The project suggests that well-designed literacy interventions have the potential to play a positive, supportive role in the transition of children from primary to secondary school in Scotland and recommends that further investigation takes place into interventions that endeavour to support children to develop as readers with regards to not only cognitive knowledge and skills but which also address their identity and agency and their cultural and social capital.

Covid-19 Statement

The Covid-19 pandemic impacted this study in several ways. More detail can be found in the specific sections of the thesis where this impact was felt most keenly but this statement will provide an overview.

Firstly, the school closures enforced by the pandemic meant that the interventions themselves were subject to change. Children in the *After School Reading Club* and *Read Write Inc: Fresh Start* were supported online towards the end of the intervention from March – May 2020. Additionally, children who participated in *Reading Ambassadors* did so online with PGDE students between September 2020 and March 2021.

The Covid-19 pandemic also affected intended data collection methods. While primary and secondary colleagues were able to communicate and exchange transition data, it was not possible to interact with children in-person as part of the transition process. Restrictions in school also made it impossible to meaningfully carry out observations of participants and to make field notes, which meant the loss of potential qualitative datasets.

It is also necessary to address some of the “soft” impacts of the pandemic. The restrictions in the local authority in which this study took place meant inevitable changes in pedagogy and classroom management and organisation. Children wore masks and could not work in groups which limited their interactions with each other and their teachers. The move to blended learning – the mix of in school and at home lessons – led to inconsistencies in children’s overall school experience. Finally, there was also an air of nervousness and trepidation among staff and pupils during this time and it is possible that engagements with interventions, assessments and interviews may have been different under more normal circumstances.

Table of Contents

Prologue: Five Stories of Literacy	xviii
---	-------

Chapter 1: Introduction

1.0 Background and Chapter Overview	1
1.1 Curriculum for Excellence and Reading Policy in Scotland	1
• 1.1.1 Reading Policy at Schools and Local Authority Level	6
• 1.1.2 Transition at National Level	7
• 1.1.3 Transition at School and Local Authority Level	8
• 1.1.4 The OECD Report 2021	12
1.2 The Impact of COVID-19 and Subsequent School Closures	13
1.3 Problem Statement	14
• 1.3.1 Problematising Reading Interventions for Older Children	14
• 1.3.2 The Significance of Transition in the Lives of Children	16
1.4 Interventions Featured in This Study	17
1.5 Research Questions	19
1.6 Chapter Summary	20

Chapter 2: Theoretical Framework

2.0 Chapter Overview	21
2.1 Bourdieu: Historical Context	21
2.2 Bourdieu: Forms of Capital	22
• 2.2.1 Bourdieu: Social and Cultural Capital	25
• 2.2.2 Bourdieu: Education	27
• 2.2.3 Bourdieu: Literacy	28
• 2.2.4 Bourdieu: New Literacy Studies	30
• 2.2.5 Bourdieu: Home and Community Literacy Practices	31
2.3 The Three Domains Tool	32
2.4 Chapter Summary	36

Chapter 3: Literature Review

3.0	Chapter Overview	37
3.1	Reading in Teaching and Research	38
3.2	Different Views of Reading: Exploring Psychological and Cognitive Perspectives	42
3.3	The Social Turn	46
3.4	Learners' Reader Identities in the Context of Poverty and the Poverty-Related Attainment Gap	51
3.5	Understanding Poverty and Attainment	56
3.6	The Relationship Between Poverty, Attainment, and Reader Identity: Problematising 'Struggling' and 'Reluctant' Readers	57
3.7	The Issue with Labels: Problematising "Struggling" and "Reluctant"	60
3.8	Transition	62
•	3.8.1 Primary to Secondary Transitions: From Synthetic Phonics to Reading for Pleasure	65
•	3.8.2 Literacy Interventions at Transition Points: Supporting and Sustaining Reading	68
3.9	Chapter Summary	70

Chapter 4: Research Methodology and Methods

4.0	Chapter Overview	71
4.1	Research Standpoint	71
4.2	Intervention Design, Rationale, and Implementation	73
•	4.2.1 The Role of the Teacher-Researcher	74
•	4.2.2 Reading Ambassadors	74
•	4.2.3 Read Write Inc: Fresh Start	77
•	4.2.4 The After-School Reading Club	78
4.3	Case Study Methodology	80
4.4	Sampling and Recruitment	83
4.5	Data Collection	85
•	4.5.1 Dataset One – Standardised Assessments	86
•	4.5.2 Dataset Two – Semi-Structured Interviews	87

4.6 Ethics and Positionality	88
• 4.6.1 Gaining Informed Consent	89
• 4.6.2 Addressing Power Imbalances	89
• 4.6.3 Anonymity and Confidentiality	90
• 4.6.4 Impact on Participants' School Experience	90
• 4.6.5 Positionality and Reflexivity	91
4.7 Data Analysis	93
• 4.7.1 Analysis of Standardised Assessment Data	93
• 4.7.2 Analysis of Semi-structured Interview Responses	94
• 4.7.3 Thematic Analysis	95
• 4.7.4 Explanation of the coding process used in this study	96
• 4.7.5 Affective Coding Methods	97
• 4.7.6 First Coding Cycle	97
• 4.7.7 Theming the data by category	98
• 4.7.8 Second Coding Cycle	98
• 4.7.9 Analytic recommendations resulting from affective coding	99
• 4.7.10 Intercoder Reliability vs Intercoder Consistency	99
• 4.7.11 Validity and Reliability	100
4.8 Limitations and Reflections on Methodology	104
• 4.8.1 Limitations	104
• 4.8.2 Reflections on the use of semi-structured interviews	105
• 4.8.3 Reflections of the use of the York Assessment of Reading Comprehension	106
• 4.8.4 Crystallisation	107
4.9 Chapter Summary	109

Chapter 5: Case Studies

5.0 Chapter Overview	110
5.1 Data and Participants in Context	110
• 5.1.1 Character of the participant cohort in this study	111
• 5.1.2 Presentation of Qualitative Data	113
• 5.1.3 Explanation of Tables and Graphs Used to Present Quantitative Data	113
5.2 Case Study One: Andrew (Reading Ambassadors)	113
• 5.2.1 YARC Assessment Scores: Andrew	114
• 5.2.2 Key themes emerging from Andrew's Interviews	116
• 5.2.3 Power	116
• 5.2.4 Access	119
• 5.2.5 Belonging	121
5.3 Case Study Two: Bree (Reading Ambassadors)	122
• 5.3.1 YARC Assessment Scores: Bree	123
• 5.3.2 Key themes emerging from Bree's Interviews	124
• 5.3.3 Power	124
• 5.3.4 Access	125
• 5.3.5 Belonging	127
5.4 Summary of interview responses and standardised assessments from Andrew and Bree (Reading Ambassadors)	128
5.5 Case Study Three: Cara	129
• 5.5.1 YARC Assessment Scores: Cara	130
• 5.5.2 Key themes emerging from Cara's Interviews	131
• 5.5.3 Power	131

• 5.5.4 Access	133
• 5.5.5 Belonging	134
5.6 Case Study Four: Daniel	135
• 5.6.1 YARC Assessment Scores: Daniel	136
• 5.6.2 Key themes emerging from Daniel's Interviews	137
• 5.6.3 Power	138
• 5.6.4 Access	139
• 5.6.5 Belonging	141
5.7 Summary of Interview Responses and Standardised Assessments from Cara and Daniel (Read Write Inc: Fresh Start)	142
5.8 Case Study Five: Erin	144
• 5.8.1 YARC Assessment Scores: Erin	145
• 5.8.2 Key themes emerging from Erin's Interviews	145
• 5.8.3 Power	146
• 5.8.4 Access	146
• 5.8.5 Belonging	148
5.9 Case Study Six: Fern	149
• 5.9.1 YARC Assessment Scores: Fern	149
• 5.9.2 Key themes emerging from Fern's Interviews	150
• 5.9.3 Power	150
• 5.9.4 Access	152
• 5.9.5 Belonging	153
5.10 Summary of interview responses and standardised assessments from Erin and Fern (After School Reading Club)	155

5.11 Chapter Summary	158
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Chapter 6: Attitudes and Attainment – Discussion

6.0 Chapter Overview	159
6.1 Discussion of Interview Responses	159
• 6.1.1 The Importance of Choice and Agency in Children’s Learning	162
• 6.1.2 Access to High-Quality, Text-Centred Dialogue	163
• 6.1.3 The Importance of Belonging	165
• 6.1.4 Summary of evidence from interviews	166
6.2 Discussion of Standardized Assessment Scores	168
• 6.2.1 The importance of implementation fidelity	169
• 6.2.2 The impact of interventions that position reading as a social practice	170
• 6.2.3 Do technical skills alone lead to improved long-term outcomes?	171
6.3 Summary of Evidence from Quantitative Data	172
6.4 Chapter Summary	173

Chapter 7: Conclusion and Recommendations

7.0 Chapter Overview	175
7.1 Project Summary	175
7.2 Main Research Findings	177
7.3 The Contribution of This Research to the Field of Reading Interventions	180
• 7.3.1 Supporting Struggling Readers	181
• 7.3.2 Supporting Reluctant Readers	183
7.4 The Contribution of This Research to the Field of Primary/Secondary Transition	185
7.5 Implications for Practice	187
7.6 Implications for Future Research	189
7.7 Final Conclusion and Key Messages	190
References	192

Prologue: Five Stories of Literacy

Background

When this study commenced, I was working as Principal Teacher of Literacy and Transition in a Scottish secondary school in an area of high deprivation. At that time, within my secondary school and our associated primary schools, the terms “struggling reader” and “reluctant reader” were labels often used at transition from Primary to Secondary to describe any learner who had not yet reached 2nd Level in reading (and by extension 2nd Level in Literacy) by the end of Primary 7, the final year of Primary School for children in Scotland. “Struggling” and “reluctant” readers (these terms are described in greater detail below) were typically treated as one and the same which often misrepresented the exact nature of the learner’s difficulty. Learners were treated as one homogenous group even though they had significantly varying needs. A more complete discussion around these terms can be found in section 3.6 of the Literature Review.

As a school, we agreed that reading was an important priority as it enabled children to access the curriculum and we acknowledged that reading skills were vital for ongoing success in all subject areas. As such, we sought to develop a clearer understanding of why children struggle with reading or are reluctant to read. A range of professional learning and research was undertaken, including the initial masters-level study I completed, and we concluded that a more appropriate definition of a “struggling” reader was a learner who had difficulty with phonics, which often presented as a problem with fluency and accuracy. Often these were students who had received additional or targeted support in reading throughout primary school. We also defined “reluctant” readers as children who would engage in minimal reading or resist in engaging with reading within the curriculum. Commonly, these students did not seek opportunities to read beyond the curriculum and were less likely to engage in reading for pleasure. Finally, as well as children whose performance in reading had alerted their teacher to the fact

that they were struggling or reluctant to read, there was also a desire from teachers in both Primary and Secondary to ensure that no children had been missed or had slipped through the cracks.

The following stories of literacy are typical of events I have encountered during my time teaching at the school and are compiled through reflections on my own experiences in education. They are told from the multiple perspectives I held as a teacher, literacy and transition lead, and researcher. These stories explain why I began to undertake this research and demonstrate how the study emerged from situated practice in a school context. They have helped to problematise the support given to, and labels used for, struggling and reluctant readers at transition. Each of the stories presented illustrates how questions about the efficacy of literacy interventions and data collection on learners' literacy attainment were raised through practice. They also locate my own experiences and positionality in conversation with the experiences of the learners I have worked with before, and as part of, this research project. My role as a teacher is described in greater detail later in this thesis. However, I believe it is important to briefly discuss my own experiences as a learner, my positionality as part of the motivation for conducting this research, and to relate my experiences to those of the children below.

Story One: My Story

My school career began in the same local authority as the study takes place. Although the same issues around local deprivation that exist now also existed then, our family circumstances placed me towards the upper end of the cohort in terms of socio-economic status. We had resources to draw upon within an extended family that was beginning to enter professions such as teaching and nursing and, while not yet entering University at degree level, there was a culture of valuing and remaining in education to secure higher paying employment. At home, we had access to books and there was a culture of conversation around stories, movies and TV series. Until Primary 4, the end of what would now be 1st level and at the age of eight, my own progress had been steady. The breakdown of the

relationship with the P4 teacher, who subsequently remained as the P5 teacher meant that my experience of the education system became more difficult. My behaviour declined and I disengaged from school. I moved to a private school in Glasgow, where my father worked as a teacher, just after Christmas of P5. The approach taken in the new establishment differed greatly from my previous school. There was a significant focus on attainment and children were ranked in class according to their performance in exams. I quickly identified that I had moved from being at the top end of the class academically and socially, to the bottom end in both respects. The children I shared a classroom with were more comfortable with education and could draw upon greater resources to support them than my family could. In retrospect, my experience is consistent with Bourdieu (1983) and theories of social and cultural capital. The other children had greater knowledge of the world, had clear pathways and ambitions, and knew how to leverage education, and the actors within it, to achieve their goals. This experience continued until Christmas of S2, at which point I returned to my local secondary school. I again found myself in the position of having greater access, resources and academic performance than most of my peers. However, I was now equipped with newfound levels of ambition, knowledge of the education system, and an understanding of the pathways I could explore to access improved social, cultural and economic domains.

I believe my experiences as a learner contribute to my understanding of the experiences of the children presented below and those who participated in the study. I have been the child who has access to capital, resources and experiences to support their development as a reader. However, I have also been the child who has access to, relatively speaking, less capital than their peers. Furthermore, I also transitioned between educational establishments on three occasions between the ages of 9 and 13. I hold an awareness of the impact such moves have on learner identity, attitudes to learning and peer group relationships.

The experiences I had as a learner also highlighted the importance of power, access, and belonging; the key findings emerging from children's responses to their experiences of literacy interventions. Transferring to a different school demonstrated the lack of power or agency – sometimes for justifiable and unavoidable reasons – children possess in these situations. While one would not expect children to have the final say on this matter it may be important to consider whether children in Primary 7 feel as though they are ready to take the step. Also, the move to a new school presented the possibility of new levels of access to greater levels of social capital, but the capital the newcomer brings must be valued by key players such as teachers and peer groups in the new establishment. Finally, a sense of belonging is vital if children are to avoid feelings of instability and alienation in their new school.

Within the five stories of literacy presented in the section that follows there are parallels with, and echoes of, my own story. Names have been changed to provide anonymity.

Story Two: Matthew's Story

When I started my post as PT Literacy and Transition, Matthew was a 15-year-old S5 pupil in my class who was repeating the National 5 English course. I had a good relationship with Matthew from the beginning. I knew his family well as I had taught both of his older siblings. I got to know his parents well through their engagement in the wider life of the school, meeting them at parents' evenings and other school events. I was also a private tutor for his sister and would eventually work with Matthew in the same capacity. The cumulative effect of these experiences was that from the beginning of our teacher-pupil relationship I was disposed to ensure that Matthew continued to succeed. This is an active example of the social capital held by Matthew and his parents having a positive impact on his school experience (Bourdieu 1983). Analysis of Matthew's previous exam performance indicated that he had been presented for National 5 in all subjects, suggesting he was "on-track". He performed reasonably

well but I noted that while he passed Modern Studies, he failed English. This was obviously an anomaly as it is reasonable to expect that the skills required to succeed in English are similar those required to succeed in Modern Studies. Through a learner conversation with Matthew – a student-teacher interaction designed to set targets and address issues in individual subjects - and through dialogue with his teachers, it became clear that Matthew was able to succeed in Modern Studies because he could effectively rote-learn the course content, whereas his English course did not support this approach, requiring a different type of engagement and criticality. Matthew said he felt, and had always felt, that reading was a struggle. He was tested for dyslexia in Primary school, but no conclusion was reached due to staff changes. Despite his difficulties, Matthew told me that he enjoyed primary school. He was often placed in top groups and his teachers received him favourably because they had enjoyed a good relationship with his siblings. They held high expectations of his brother and sister and transferred them onto him. This afforded Matthew certain privileges. He would ask for help and teachers would readily support him, viewing his requests for help as a desire to improve and as engagement in the subject. His description of how he experienced reading had all the hallmarks of dyslexia and as he was in S5 I escalated his literacy consultation. Matthew was then identified as dyslexic following consultation with the Educational Psychologist.

My experience with Matthew made me consider the following areas;

- How can a pupil reach S5 while displaying several dyslexic-type difficulties without receiving a diagnosis or any further investigation?
- How it is remarkable that a pupil with dyslexic-type behaviours, who has received no direct support or intervention, succeeded in National 5 exams.
- What can be done to ensure that pupils like Matthew - and those without his access to similar resources - no longer slip through the net and instead receive the support they need?

Huang (2019, p. 45) states that “an individual who has some valuable social networks, such as knowing important or influential people, can be said to have social capital.” This made me wonder whether Matthew had thus far evaded a dyslexia diagnosis because of the social capital he brought to school. His standing in the school community and the academic successes of his siblings led his teachers to believe that Matthew would follow a similar trajectory. Being in top literacy groups meant that Matthew could be scaffolded by his peers. He could access their ideas, interests and draw on their funds of knowledge to supplement his own (Moll et al., 2006). This is supported by McGillicuddy and Dymna (2019), who consider that children in higher ability groupings have greater access to resources and teacher input. Additionally, being from a middle-class household was a potential reason why Matthew enjoyed success in SQA exams despite his difficulties. The level of social capital he enjoyed (Bourdieu, 1986) ensured that he could draw on family and community resources to support his learning. Matthew also told me that he enjoyed the programme ‘Narcos’ on Netflix. Despite a significant portion of each episode being subtitled from Spanish, Matthew was able to follow the narrative and would develop his comprehension by engaging in conversations with his dad about the plot and characters. This provided me with insights into Matthew’s literacy practices and how he had developed text-based strategies to help him understand complex texts. Dialogue around a text aided his understanding – something he relied on in class and benefitted from having with his able peer group. Finally, Matthew’s family were able to pay for tuition in English and other subjects to provide him with additional support beyond the school context. As supported by Bourdieu (1986), their access to resources beyond other families’ means may also have played a significant role in his success.

The experience with Matthew was a watershed moment for me. I was interested in the fact that he presented differently from our expectations of a pupil with so-called difficulties. He had a high level of support at home, was popular with his peers and well-regarded both personally and academically by his teachers. I was concerned that, in school at least, he had gone unsupported. I decided that at

transition it was necessary to have more robust, wide-ranging data regarding the specific nature of pupils' difficulties to ensure that any action we initiated was appropriate. I was also determined that, moving forward, a significant part of my transition work throughout the cluster would focus on learning about the assets children brought to secondary school; their community and family experiences of sharing stories, discussing a wide variety of texts and creating their own written and oral texts to share with each other. The experience with Matthew taught me that this information was at least as important as finding out about their difficulties.

Story Three: Holly's Story

Holly was an 11-year-old P7 pupil in one of our associated primaries during the first year that I worked in transition. She was described by her P7 teacher as "surly" and "withdrawn" but there was no mention of any specific learning difficulty. The teacher considered her to be lazy and unwilling to engage in tasks, particularly in reading. Tobbell and O'Donnell (2013) discuss the importance of teacher-pupil relationships in relation to the levels of motivation felt by pupils towards a particular subject. There is no criticism of the Primary 7 teacher within this interaction or assessment of Holly. The primary school context is very different to secondary school in that children essentially spend all day with their teacher rather than moving from subject to subject. This can create opportunities to develop nurturing, positive relationships. However, in other circumstances it can also serve to intensify issues or problems that arise in the teacher-pupil relationship and points to the way that teacher-pupil relationships, and particularly teachers' perceptions of learners, can surface in transition data exchanged between primary and secondary schools. In the context of Holly's difficulties, this assessment by her teacher suggests that a more positive relationship with her teacher could have resulted in a much more positive outcome and a more favourable view of herself as a learner. This is supported by Kennedy and Kennedy (2004), who stress the importance of "the development of relationships beyond the family environment that provide emotional support and protection" (p. 251).

To gain a clearer picture of the incoming year group the school made the decision to carry out a York Assessment of Reading Comprehension (YARC), a standardised reading assessment, with each child from our associated primaries. In hindsight, this is not a process I would repeat. While there were several gains that will be outlined in the next paragraph, it could be argued that this ran the risk of over-testing the P7 pupils. In part, this thesis outlines how qualitative data serves to contribute toward teachers' fuller understanding of learners' literacy practices and needs, as well as the benefits they perceive when engaged in literacy support interventions.

This approach to assessment did, however, have several positive outcomes:

- The YARC tests were carried out by a team of teachers from different areas of the curriculum, allowing them to see first-hand the nature of pupils' reading difficulties
- We were able to identify pupils with high comprehension scores and raise our expectations of them in a way that the teacher judgement report did not
- We were able to identify pupils with difficulties that had not been spotted by the primary, had been managed by the teacher or where evidence was not yet strong enough to point towards a specific type of support

Holly's YARC test revealed that while her reading fluency was poor, her comprehension was beyond what would be expected from a pupil her age. In discussion about texts and class content she was perceptive and communicated complex ideas. She stated that she enjoyed working with her group of friends – all high achieving pupils – and displayed a level of anxiety at the thought that she may not be able to work with them in secondary school. As with Matthew, this connects to Bourdieu (1986) and frames Holly's social capital as being valued within her peer network but not necessarily beyond that. Holly also shared that much of the work in her P7 class involved copying instructions from the board and that it frustrated her that she could not keep up.

The performance in the YARC test led us down the path of a dyslexia diagnosis which was quickly confirmed by our Educational Psychologist. I wondered if Holly's situation in her P7 class could have been avoided. She was displaying signs of frustration at not being able to work at the same pace as others and this impacted on her behaviour, her relationship with her teachers and ultimately her self-esteem. Had the teacher been more aware of Holly's difficulties, the relationship and subsequent outcomes may have been more positive.

Holly's story emphasised the importance of accurately identifying any literacy difficulties at transition. Had Holly's dyslexia not been identified and the only information we had was that she was surly or lazy then her trajectory through school and her attitude towards it could have been very different. Our attention was now focused on exploring ways for teachers to gain or gather accurate data, quantitative and qualitative, about the pupils they would be teaching.

Story Four: Paul's Story

Paul was part of a transition group where the secondary school provided reluctant readers with high interest texts and worked with them across 6 sessions in the summer term before transition to high school. It quickly became apparent that Paul was a struggling reader rather than a reluctant reader. While he enjoyed the sessions, he found it difficult to complete much reading from week to week and felt that he did not have a great deal to contribute when discussing his book. I asked the P7 teacher about Paul's progress through primary school. He was never diagnosed with any specific learning difficulty but was considered to have global learning delay, a recognition that he did not meet expected developmental milestones in line with his peers. Furthermore, he had several risk factors in his story. He lived in SIMD 1 and had poor school attendance, sometimes due to truancy. The concern around these intersecting difficulties is supported by Roque et al., (2017) who make clear that there is a link between

poor attendance and poor post-school outcomes. Despite the concern, Paul was quiet and mannerly, and his behaviour raised no concerns.

Transition was therefore an important time for Paul, and we had to think carefully about how to support him in his journey through secondary school, and particularly the vital first few months of S1. Paul's standardised assessment displayed lower than expected attainment in every aspect of reading. His phonological knowledge, fluency, comprehension, and vocabulary recognition were at a level that told us he would struggle with the first-year curriculum. He was judged by his teacher to still be working at 1st level which, at the end of Primary Four, would have an upper reading age of 9 years, representing an almost three-year deficit for a 12-year-old pupil entering first year. While Paul was an obvious candidate for an intervention that supported him to become more proficient in phonics, it was important to ensure that the rest of his teachers in other subject areas knew of his difficulties and were aware of how to support him in class. Guidance was issued stating that he should not be asked to copy from the board, that he would benefit from using printed notes, additional explanations and tasks being broken down into manageable chunks.

The main reason why Paul did not fully attract the attention of his teachers stemmed from the fact that he was compliant in class and displayed behaviour that was consistent within the expectations of his teacher. As considered by Mowat (2019), ordinarily, a pupil with low levels of literacy would eventually be expected to express their frustration in such a way that would bring them to the attention of staff. However, this was not the case with Paul and there was a risk that he could blend into the background in classes. His lower school-literacy skills meant that he faced challenges in all areas of the curriculum and there was an urgent need to support him to be able to access material in class.

Although support in phonics was an obvious intervention for Paul, given his current level of phonological knowledge, there was legitimate concern around the impact his participation would have

on his identity as a learner (Bernstein, 2000). The feeling of being separated from his peers or being withdrawn on rotation from subjects he enjoys could have led to even more disengagement with school (Boyd, 2007).

Story Five: Shane's Story

Shane was a pupil from SIMD 2 with a difficult background. He lives in the care of his elderly grandparents due to the death of his father and his mother's subsequent struggles with drug and alcohol dependency. Despite difficulties in Shane's life outside of school he had a real thirst for learning and engaged well in school. His attainment was on par with his peers', and he displayed a love of reading. He had a twin brother who was less interested in the academic side of school but who still engaged and made good progress. I felt that Shane belonged to a particularly vulnerable group of pupils who had no real support in the school system – learners who were extremely capable but likely to underachieve because of the backwards momentum their circumstances created. Shane did not complete much homework, and his P7 teacher viewed him as average in attainment. This was contrary to his attainment in the YARC test which showed a standardised score far in advance of someone his age. However, the perception of Shane as average meant that without triangulation of his performance involving teacher judgement, standardised assessment data and his performance in class he was likely to continue to underachieve throughout school. The problems caused by low expectations are supported by Malone et al (2023), who position children's performance, behaviour and learner identity as being negatively impacted if they are held in poor regard by their teacher. This is also the case for Holly, featured in Story Three, who was described as "lazy" by her teacher. Ultimately, Shane's grandparents did not possess the necessary (or the "correct") social or cultural capital to negotiate with the institution regarding his progress or even the classes he was placed in. They accepted the school's assessment of him without question. This again links to Bourdieu (1983) and theories of social and cultural capital. Shane's kinds of social capital are not deemed valuable by the school. When Shane deploys any

knowledge, skills or interests he possesses, the fact that the school privileges a different set of knowledge, skills and interests means that the impact of his own social capital is limited. Furthermore, the social capital possessed by his grandparents makes it difficult for them to navigate engaging with the school with any confidence.

Shane was exactly the sort of pupil who should be supported using Pupil Equity funding. The most appropriate interventions for him involved supporting his home literacy environment through the purchase of high interest and high challenge texts for him to keep. Furthermore, by not asking for texts to be returned there was also the possibility his brother would engage in reading. Shane also benefitted from conversations with older pupils to help support his comprehension. These sessions also made him feel valued and that his opinion on texts mattered.

Key messages from the Five Stories of Literacy

Each of the four stories of literacy presented in this section illustrate the difficulties and challenges faced by children who are described as “struggling” or “reluctant” readers when they transfer to secondary school. Firstly, Matthew is representative of children who slip through the net because of the resources they can draw upon (Bourdieu, 1986) to mask their difficulties in school. His experience demonstrates the fact that a learner can be deemed to be progressing and performing in school if they engage, behave in line with expected norms, are placed alongside high-attaining peers, and can deploy valued forms of capital (Boaler et al., 2000). Holly’s story conveys the importance of the teacher-pupil relationship and the impact it can have on learner identity. Her experience aligns with Coffey (2013) who states that “It is necessary to acknowledge the importance of teachers’ understanding and responding to the issues with which the students struggle during transition” (p. 267). It also illustrates the impact of teacher expectations (Malone et al., 2023) on a child’s attitude to learning. Through Paul’s eyes, we see the child who is unlikely to trouble the teacher by asking for help and becomes forgotten and

unsupported (Mowat, 2019). Finally, Shane’s story reveals the difficulties some families have in navigating the school and the wider social landscape. His lack of engagement was treated as a lack of ability and, like Holly, resulted in the imposition of low teacher expectations which impacted on judgement of his ability (Malone et al., 2023).

These stories helped to shape my understanding of transition and of the impact of reading interventions children accessed at that point in their school careers. I recognised the different factors at play in how children were positioned within the social and educational framework because of their social and cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1986), the expectations teachers and key adults had of them (Malone et al., 2023) and the impact of the pathways they were placed on (Boaler et al., 2000). It was also clear that transition itself accelerated and possibly entrenched these different experiences (Mowat, 2019).

Throughout this thesis, the literacy experiences of participants – Andrew, Bree, Cara, Daniel, Erin and Fern – are foregrounded and their thoughts and ideas regarding the interventions they accessed are quoted extensively. Their experiences display clear parallels with those featured in the five stories of literacy. While all learners were assessed at the end of Primary 7 as being a “struggling” or “reluctant” reader, we learn that some children are competent readers whose reading practices and habits are not necessarily recognised or valued in school. Additionally, some children express their frustration with the lack of agency or influence they have over the texts they read in school. Another parallel is the fact that some learners view reading as an opportunity to access domains of society they value or that they feel will enhance their own social, cultural or economic capital. Finally, there is a clear commonality in the way that children who participated in the interventions and children featured in the five stories of literacy feel a sense of belonging when their reading practices are valued by peers and staff in school.

Chapter One: Introduction

1.0 Background and Chapter Overview

This chapter is presented in four sections. Firstly, it seeks to illustrate the importance of reading and transition within the Scottish curriculum and their place within the policy landscape at national, local, and school level. There is then a statement of the impact of Covid-19 and subsequent school closures on this study. Finally, this chapter concludes with a problem statement and then states the research questions, identifying the issues around struggling and reluctant readers at transition that will be examined during this thesis.

1.1 Curriculum for Excellence and Reading Policy in Scotland

Between Primary 1 and third year in secondary (S3), the curriculum in Scotland is labelled the Broad General Education (BGE) and is driven by the Curriculum for Excellence (CfE, 2010) experiences and outcomes. These provide an age and stage appropriate framework within which teachers have scope to provide bespoke learning experiences for children they teach. Outcomes resulting from these experiences are then assessed against the national benchmarks. While both schools and local authorities share responsibility for the content of what is taught, they are required to consider the advice and guidelines laid out by CfE documentation, including the Literacy and English Principles and Practice document (Education Scotland, 2010). Implementation of the policy is supported by Education Scotland, an executive agency of the Scottish Government with responsibility for the continuous improvement of Scotland's education system.

Alongside the CfE framework, children's progress is also rooted in development of the four capacities which focus on supporting them to become "confident individuals, successful learners, effective contributors, and responsible citizens" (Curriculum for Excellence: Education Scotland, 2010). Each of the four capacities has its own attributes, describing what children will be able to do as they

develop their skills in each area. According to the Refreshed Narrative for Scotland's Curriculum (Education Scotland, 2019), children who develop as confident individuals will possess self-respect, a sense of physical and mental wellbeing, and will feel secure in their values and beliefs. Successful learners will display enthusiasm and motivation for learning, be determined to improve their performance, and will remain open to new thinking and ideas. Children who are effective contributors will have an enterprising attitude and display resilience and self-reliance. Finally, responsible citizens will show respect for others, and be committed to participating responsibly in political, economic, social and cultural life. Consideration of the four capacities is therefore important when designing or implementing reading interventions. Interventions must support, rather than hinder, wellbeing, self-respect and learners' sense of security in their beliefs. They must ensure that they foster a sense of enthusiasm, motivation and provide clear pathways for improvement. Additionally, in this context, interventions should support children to become more resilient and independent in their learning. Finally, interventions should leave children as well-placed as possible to engage with society.

In literacy and English, the experiences and outcomes and the accompanying benchmarks are broadly defined to allow teachers to recognise, and for children to pursue, different avenues for success. For example, achieving 2nd Level, the expected standard in reading for children at the end of primary 7, in writing may look different in terms of content and approach, in different local authorities. With the continuing dominance of discourses of literacy attainment, these social understandings of literacy and educational development can then be skewed toward a focus on attainment and performance in tests and exams as opposed to improvement as a reader that includes a commitment to reading for pleasure, enjoyment and a sustained interest in reading beyond school and education

The national policy context for teaching reading in Scotland is complex. As with most areas of education, policy responsibility for reading is devolved to Scotland's thirty-two local authorities. While

this allows for local solutions and context-based approaches, having thirty-two separate approaches means it can also lead to inconsistency nationally, making it difficult to identify effective practice.

Within CfE, literacy, numeracy, and health and wellbeing are foregrounded as national priorities in Scotland and are the responsibility of all staff, no matter their curricular expertise. Within literacy, there are three areas: listening and talking, reading and writing. Reading, like all other curricular areas, is then subdivided with outcomes and experiences for each of the CfE levels which are then assessed through benchmarks attached to the curriculum organisers. For reading these are; enjoyment and choice, tools for reading, finding and using information and understanding, analysing and evaluating. Progression through these organisers is measured through the application of benchmarks, with emphasis placed on holistic judgements to ascertain achievement of a level.

Children begin their CfE journey in Early Years settings from the age of 3 and continue their learning in primary school. It is expected that children achieve Early Level by the end of P1, 1st Level by the end of P4, and 2nd Level by the end of P7. The achievement of 3rd and 4th level in secondary school is more complex and, in the case of literacy and English, more contentious. In most subject areas there is progression through 3rd and 4th level and into National Qualifications. However, in the context of the school within which this study is located, in literacy and English a substantial number of pupils achieve 3rd level by the end of S3 but still go on to sit and achieve National 5 English. The explanation for this lies in the fact that literacy and English is a largely skills-based subject area as opposed to being predominantly content or knowledge-based.

The prominence afforded to literacy and reading in the curriculum recognises that it is a key component of a learner's ability to meet the four capacities. While there is no prescribed or standard reading pedagogy in Scotland, the Experiences and Outcomes, used to plan learning experiences for children, set out an expectation that children are taught to read and that they reach a certain level of

competence by the time they achieve each CfE level. As is typical for learners in other English-speaking nations (Storch & Whitehurst, 2002), in Scotland, learners in Early and 1st Level of CfE, typically in early years settings through to the end of Primary 3, are learning to read through development of oral comprehension, encoding and decoding skills and phonological awareness. As learners move on to 2nd level and beyond from Primary 4 onwards, most children are reading to learn. At this stage, teaching of reading focuses on comprehension, morphological awareness, etymology, fluency and intonation.

As education policy is a devolved matter, the approach to teaching reading in Scotland (and, indeed in Wales) differs greatly from policy in England and Northern Ireland. A key reason for this is the difference in response from both nations to the longitudinal Clackmannanshire study which highlighted the gains made by initial readers being taught to read through a focus on systematic synthetic phonics (Johnston & Watson, 2005). In England, the Rose Report (Rose, 2006), based on findings from the Clackmannanshire study, recommended that synthetic systematic phonics (SSP) should be the central pedagogical approach through which all children are taught to read. Wyse and Styles (2007) reported that the UK government mandated that, “early reading instruction must include synthetic phonics” (p. 1). This directive from the UK government meant that not only did pedagogy change to focus on synthetic phonics, but the way children were assessed and how schools were judged also changed. In recent years this focus on synthetic phonics has only increased in intensity (Wyse & Bradbury, 2022). However, the response from Scottish education officials was somewhat different. While the Clackmannanshire study was considered by Scottish policy makers, a report from Her Majesty’s Inspectorate of Education in Scotland (2006) stated that: “Whilst this programme had made a strong impact on pupils’ ability to sound out, spell and recognise words, further work was required to link these” (p. 4). This response ensured, at the time, a less fractious debate in Scotland regarding the teaching of SSP (Ellis, 2007). This move, in contrast to England, allowed literacy, and especially reading, to continue to be approached by teachers as more than just the development of technical skills.

Within CfE, Building the Curriculum 5 (BTC5) (2011), was designed to provide a framework for assessment. It aimed to recognise achievement related to the full range of learning, to be fair and inclusive and to recognise that children progress in different ways and at different speeds. This is especially relevant in the context of this study as both *Reading Ambassadors* and the *After School Reading Club*, interventions accessed by children as part of this study, attempt to value texts read by learners of their own choosing and at their own pace. This contrasts with the model offered by *Read Write Inc: Fresh Start*, where progress is very much determined by the pace at which you progress through the programme. These interventions are a core aspect of this study and are therefore discussed in more detail in chapter four.

Despite the different response to the Clackmannanshire study, the issue is still not completely settled in Scotland. The advent of Pupil Equity and Scottish Attainment Challenge funding opened the door to interventions being purchased on a school-by-school basis, meaning schools are, in principle, free to pursue strategies and interventions they feel will support learners in their specific context. While this is a positive aspect of the Scottish education system, the need for ongoing improvement in attainment, and the closing the gap agenda, means that school leaders are attracted to programmes that offer systematic approaches to teaching reading. While these approaches are beneficial and suitable for many children, they do not meet the needs of all learners. There is also a groundswell of support on social media platforms such as Twitter/ X for phonics to be placed at the forefront of the teaching of reading. Furthermore, the attraction of these programmes may be compounded by budget restraints at local authority and school level as buying programmes in bulk is cheaper and can save money by essentially outsourcing training, negating the need to employ as many staff to serve on central teams. However, my experience of the system in Scotland highlights the fact that the question is not whether systematic synthetic phonics has been implemented, but the level of robustness and consistency with which these programmes are adopted.

1.1.1 Reading Policy at Local Authority/ School Level

The absence of a prescriptive national policy on teaching reading in Scotland means that local authorities and schools are free to pursue their own approaches to teaching reading and to implement policy at local or school level. In the context that this study took place, the local authority has its own literacy policy from early years through to P7 which is also mostly followed when learners move into secondary school. This local authority is situated in the central belt of Scotland in an area of high deprivation. In recent years the closure of school and public libraries has reduced opportunities for children in less affluent areas to access texts and engage in reading for pleasure (Sun et al., 2021; Hider et al., 2023).

As described in the previous section, and in line with practice in Scotland, learners typically move from "learning to read" to "reading to learn" as they progress through school, with the focus shifting from teaching phonics to the teaching of strategies children can independently employ to support comprehension. In 2017, the local authority also introduced *Read Write Inc: Fresh Start* as a reading intervention for older pupils identified by their class teacher as struggling readers in Primary 7. This system moved pupils who found reading difficult from a system with 42 synthetic phonics to the more common 44 synthetic phonics. This is significant as it meant, in essence, that children who struggled with one package of letter-sound combinations were then moved on to a package with different letter-sound combinations. Additionally, this created a disconnect in reading for learners accessing this intervention, as they were very much in the "learning to read" phase most associated with Early and First level, while trying to navigate a Second to Fourth Level secondary curriculum, based on "reading to learn".

Furthermore, although the local authority's literacy policy is considered mandatory, in recent years schools have exercised greater autonomy in their choice of phonics package and approach to

teaching reading. This can have an impact when planning support for those identified as struggling or reluctant readers takes place between primary and secondary schools, as it is not certain that there is commonality in the approaches children experienced when learning to read.

1.1.2 Transition at National Level

Scotland does not have a national policy on transition or transfer from primary to secondary school. However, it is still recognised by schools, local authorities and policymakers as a vitally important event in a child's life. The Scottish Government published a systematic review (2019) in conjunction with the University of Dundee to identify impact of transitions and the features of a successful transfer to secondary school. The report identified that, despite its obvious importance, primary/-secondary transition has not been the subject of any significant educational research. Furthermore, the report considers that transition from primary to secondary often coincides with a dip in attainment in literacy. This has in part been attributed to differences in pedagogy and teacher expectations. The report also notes that the dip in attainment post-transition to secondary is not particular to Scotland and can be found in several other countries across the world (Alexander, 2010).

The 2019 systematic review sets out to answer 5 key questions surrounding primary/-secondary transition;

1. What does the evidence from the UK and other countries suggest about the impact of the primary to secondary transition on educational outcomes and wellbeing?
2. What does the research suggest about the experiences of children and young people during their transition from primary to secondary?
3. What are the key factors that make a positive or negative contribution to the primary-secondary transition?

4. What does the evidence suggest about the differential impact of transition on children facing additional educational barriers such as poverty or additional support needs?
5. What does international evidence suggest about the characteristics of educational systems that support or hinder the transition experience?

The review concludes that there is robust evidence to suggest that educational attainment is negatively impacted by transition and that motivation, attendance and attitude to school decline. Health and wellbeing can also be negatively impacted with increased behavioural problems, a decline in connectedness and increased levels of depression and anxiety. This connection is explored in more detail in the literature review (see chapter two) alongside the impact of declining attendance in learners who disengage from school.

Crucially, the review also establishes a link between educational and health and wellbeing outcomes, positing that transition was much more difficult for learners with lower ability, poorer academic performance and lower levels of self-esteem. While there is little research into transition from primary to secondary school, there is evidence to support the practice of learners with additional support needs being supported through an enhanced form of transition. Furthermore, factors relating to relationships with peers, teachers and family, and the school environment were considered a key contribution to a positive transition (Coffey, 2013).

1.1.3 Transition at Local Authority and School Level

It is perhaps telling that there is no clearly defined policy at local or school level regarding transition in the setting where this study takes place. Instead, groups of associated schools, or clusters, are free to make their own arrangements for transition. The cluster featured in this study consisted of the secondary school and six associated primaries within the wider catchment area whose pupils would automatically transition at the end of Primary 7. Across the cluster, work was ongoing to bring about

year-on-year improvement by reflecting on the school's process and engaging in self-evaluation and dialogue at cluster level around our approach to transition. This was an important part of building cross-sector relationships which encourage the sharing of information and experiences, and ultimately benefit the children involved.

Another sign of the priority given to transition in our cluster was my appointment as Principal Teacher of Literacy and Transition. This middle-management role was funded using the Pupil Equity Fund (PEF), created by the Scottish Government as part of the 'Closing the Gap' strategy. Based on the proportion of children residing within deciles 1 and 2 of the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD), the primary measure for economic deprivation used across Scotland, the Scottish Government provided additional funding to schools to help close the poverty related attainment gap. It is important to note that this funding bypassed local authorities and was awarded directly to schools, allowing Head Teachers to determine how it could best be used to support children in their setting. A significant part of this post's remit was to ensure an effective transition for the most deprived pupils in our catchment area in SIMD 1 and 2. A more detailed discussion around SIMD and associated tensions can be found in chapter 5.1.1.

The literacy focus of this post, and my subject background, also allowed me to provide pre-transition and post-transition support for children with reading difficulties. Importantly, Primary Head Teachers and Primary 7 teachers also now benefitted from having a more regular point of contact in secondary, ensuring more effective communication between centres. My initial impression of the support offered by our school was that it needed to change to become more learner-centred. Before my appointment, transition processes involved a visit from the Principal Teacher and Depute Head Teacher responsible for S1. There would also be visits from departments such as English and Maths and Primary 7 pupils would have the opportunity to visit the school over the course of three days in the summer term. This allowed children to become familiar with the school building, meet teachers of subjects such

as Science and Music, for whom subject-specific equipment made visits to primary schools impractical, and participate in a sports day. While these activities started the process of children engaging with their new school, the one-off nature of these visits meant that they only scratched the surface in relation to addressing the important aspects of a successful transition (Coffey, 2013; Mowat, 2019) – described in more detail later in this chapter – such as creating a sense of belonging, empowering children to exercise agency over their curriculum, and providing access to resources and interactions. Academic information exchanged at transition also provided children’s CfE levels. While this is an important data set and should help secondary staff understand what their new classes are capable of, it reports on individuals in relation to a level rather than as a child. Dunlop (2021) argues that the benefits gained from early childhood experiences in school can be further developed through effective transition processes and advocates for further research in this area. Additionally, she suggests that the definition of an effective transition should be “understood through the dual lens of wellbeing and attainment over time” (p. 2). This marks an important shift in what we consider to be important in transition as it promotes wellbeing as being equally important as attainment and, as such, notes that transition processes should reflect this.

The most common practice at local level reflects the transition practices described above in relation to my own setting. Schools across the local authority generally embark on a transition programme that provides secondary schools with personal data (e.g., information about family circumstances, friendship groups, likes and dislikes, and wider achievement) and academic data on the children transferring from primary. Some establishments also endeavour to make children feel part of their new school by allocating time to induction days where children begin to gain familiarity with aspects of secondary such as the layout of the school building, transitions between different subjects and staff, an insight into extra-curricular activities the school may offer and reassurance that they will be grouped with their peers from primary. These measures demonstrate that best practice in this area

recognises the importance of belonging and learner identity in the transition process. This is supported by Mowat (2019) who contends that an effective transition can be crucial in allaying children's fears around curriculum, peer groups, relationships, bullying and other areas they consider important. Additionally, we agreed in our cluster that best practice would also be to recognise that there is more to a child's story than the raw attainment data gathered at transition. Dialogue between the P7 class teacher and the secondary school is key to being able to meet children's needs and understand their learning journey from their first day of S1. These conversations can help teachers to build up a far clearer picture of children transitioning to high school and can help to fill in the gaps that exist in the transfer of pastoral information. Teachers can benefit from discussions around peer group relationships, strategies that children respond well to, and areas of interest evident from their response to different learning contexts in primary school.

In literacy, the attainment data gathered at school level is based on teacher professional judgement of pupil performance. As previously mentioned, pupils in Scotland are expected to achieve 2nd level in reading, writing, talking and listening by the end of P7. However, one difficulty with the way we gather data at local and national level is that performance in these strands is conflated into one judgement for literacy. This makes it difficult to identify specific areas for development and demonstrates why dialogue and communication with P7 teachers is vital to understanding the true picture of pupil performance, particularly for those who require additional support (Mowat, 2019). More appropriate and detailed data provides a picture of performance in each area and is supported by moderation between primary and secondary staff, and discussions on what success looks like at 2nd and 3rd level. This helps to ensure consistency across the cluster and continuity of learning between P7 and S1.

In reading, moderation was vital for our cluster in establishing shared values between 2nd level at the end of P7 and 3rd level at the start of S1. Professional dialogue among primary and secondary

colleagues indicated that there was now a shared understanding among teachers in the cluster that not all pupils will be ready for 3rd level at the beginning of S1 and that some may have moved well into the level by the time they start secondary. There was also greater teacher confidence among primary staff around what 3rd level looks like, and staff felt more confident in recognising achievement beyond the expectation of Primary 7. Staff also had a better understanding of the practices valued by secondary. Furthermore, secondary staff in the English department gained an improved understanding of 2nd level. They more readily valued the achievements of children at that stage and recognised how they could build on this in S1. Evidence of this could also be found in subsequent transition data where it was clear that Primary colleagues felt empowered to assess an increasing number of children against 3rd level benchmarks.

1.1.4 OECD Report 2021

The current policy context in Scotland must also be considered through the lens of the OECD review of the Curriculum for Excellence (2021). In 2019, the Scottish Government asked the OECD to assess the implementation and to suggest areas for improvement to ensure that it continues to meet the needs of Scotland's learners. This report examined the initial design and implementation of CfE, stakeholder engagement, and the extent to which Scotland had a coherent policy environment. It also made several recommendations for the future, including greater alignment between the broad general education of early years to S3 and the senior phase of S4 –S6. This alignment would see greater commonality in terms of pedagogy and approaches to assessment with practices used in the BGE being adopted more widely in the Senior Phase and would also attend to the aspirations laid out by the four capacities; enabling children to become successful learners, confident individuals, responsible citizens and effective contributors. The OECD report also stresses the importance of continuity at transition and the need for alignment in approach between primary and secondary.

Additionally, the OECD report also suggests that alongside current measures of progress in literacy and numeracy, additional metrics are necessary to determine progress on the four capacities, including enjoyment of learning. This is significant in relation to this study as a key finding from children's perspectives was the need to apply more than just a technical skills lens to assessment of attainment in reading. This statement also bears relevance to this study when we consider learners views of reading and themselves as readers, and the impact high-interest texts and motivation for reading has upon them.

1.2 The impact of Covid-19 and subsequent school closures

This section provides context for this study pertaining to the impact of Covid-19 and the subsequent school closures in March 2020.

After ethical approval for this project was granted in February 2020, I asked for participants for the project and identified six participants who met the criteria. This process is described in greater detail when discussing methodology in chapter four. I had access to teacher judgement of reading attainment in P7 and S1 and YARC assessment data for pupils involved in RWI which helped to contextualise the participants' attainment up to that point.

The closure of schools in March 2020 led to difficulty in gathering data in the form of semi-structured interviews which were due to take place before the Easter holidays began. While Covid-19 delayed the project to some degree, these exceptional circumstances provided me with the opportunity to reconsider some of the questions used in the participants' interviews. In April 2020 it became clear that schools would not reopen until August 2020, leaving the participants with a gap of 5 months between school experiences. As this project features commentary on the importance of transition, especially for the participants, I adapted the interview questions to identify how pupils feel about the return to school, which interventions they felt they needed on their return and whether their feelings on

reading had changed during their time away. Furthermore, I asked about the type of media they accessed, their experience of home learning, and whether they felt supported by the school community and by extension the education authority. The systematic review I completed as coursework during the taught part of this doctorate focused on identifying what works in supporting older pupils with reading difficulties. This assignment was of significant help in reintegrating these pupils into school, particularly the knowledge I had developed around summer learning loss and regression.

A more detailed account of the impact of Covid-19 on the methods used in this study can be found in chapter four.

1.3 Problem Statement

While there are many studies that focus on phonics, reading as social practice and transition, a systematic review revealed that, at the time of writing, there had been no studies carried out in Scotland directly examining the way teachers support older children who are categorised or labelled as ‘struggling’ and ‘reluctant’ readers at transition. Therefore, this study sought to use the given context to ascertain how best to support these children at transition to secondary school.

1.3.1 Problematising reading interventions for older children

The best approach to take when teaching reading, particularly early reading, has been the subject of fierce debate for several decades (Torgerson et al., 2019). This debate shows no signs of abating, continues to be a high-profile issue in schools and in educational research, and has continued throughout the course of this thesis. Most recently, in relation to pedagogy in England, Wyse and Bradbury (2021) highlighted the fact that teaching synthetic phonics is the most common approach taken to teaching reading, with significant resources and teaching time assigned to it. However, they questioned whether this was purely based on data that supported the position of phonics as the most effective early reading pedagogy or because schools in England were judged on pupil performance in

phonics. This charge was answered by Brooks (2023), who restated the strength of evidence in favour of phonics being justified as the dominant approach to teaching early reading. Interestingly, Cushing (2000) criticises the use of a top-down, prescriptive approach to language. In relation to the technical skills focus that are a feature of autonomous approaches to literacy and reading, he argues:

A major criticism of the GPS tests and their associated policy documents then, is in the way that they are underpinned by a prescriptive ideology and societal stigmas, with the use of evaluative adjectives such as 'correct' and 'incorrect' serving to promote SE and 'right ways of speaking' at the expense of non-standardised forms (p. 429).

Cushing argues that top-down approaches to literacy and reading are woven into practices that entrench class and race related prejudice. Using these approaches to define acceptable ways of speaking, writing and making meaning from text means that children whose home and community literacy practices do not reflect success, as often narrowly defined by policy, are at a disadvantage within the school system. This links to the description of the context for this study, where a significant number of children are from SIMD 1 and 2 and who are disadvantaged by this deficit model.

In Scotland there is no government-mandated approach to teaching reading. However, schools in this LA cluster focused on phonics, as advised by local authority policy, in early reading before moving on to explicit teaching of reading comprehension strategies when learners enter the "reading to learn stage" in 1st level from P2-P4. The local authority approach meant that these stages of reading were woven together and developed concurrently as opposed to being treated as separate entities. Reading comprehension was attended to during early reading and proficiency in phonics was still part of 1st level literacy instruction if learners required that support. So, to some extent, Cushing's analysis and argument might be extended to the Scottish context, but how deficit understandings of literacy and literacy learning surface may be less explicit. That is, they surface in the dominant discourses about

literacy attainment. From the stories of literacy presented in the prologue we can also see that they are present in deficit understandings of class using learner-data, and the local authority's investment in programmes such as *RWI: Fresh Start* over other packages or initiatives.

Approaches to teaching reading, and the contested space they exist in, are important for this study as they inform approaches to creating and implementing reading interventions. Many reading interventions focus on addressing gaps in proficiency in phonics. The fact that these programmes typically commence at the beginning of P1 means that this is often the first area where children are likely to present with a reading difficulty. As a teacher in the local authority, with knowledge of the input that had taken place throughout primary school, it was difficult to see that this approach should still be taken after seven years of instruction. Therefore, this study seeks to ascertain which interventions are most impactful, for whom, under which circumstances, and in what ways.

1.3.2 The significance of transition in the lives of children

Transition is a significant area of education and a significant event in the lives of young people (Mowat, 2019). Children in Scotland experience transition from Early Learning and Childcare settings to Primary school between the ages of 4 and 5. They will then transition from Primary to Secondary school between the age of 11 and 12 at the end of Primary 7. However, it is also important to recognise that transition also takes place between classes at the end of a school year and between phases of education. Children move from the Broad General Education, experienced from the age of 3 in early years, to the senior phase and National Qualifications from the age of 15 to 18. Within this phase, between the end of S4 and the end of S6 schools aim for learners to transition to employment, education or training settings.

Hanewald (2013) characterises the issue around transition by reminding us of the practicalities associated with the change in environment children experience when moving from primary to

secondary school. They typically transition to a larger building that is possibly further from home, a timetable with more teachers, and a curriculum with more rigid delineation between subject areas. Children are also asked to navigate several transitions each day as they move from subject to subject. For learners who struggle this can be particularly challenging as their difficulties, and the steps taken to overcome them, can be less well known by their new teachers.

Furthermore, The Scottish Executive Education Department (SEED, 2007) highlights the fact that transition from primary to secondary school can be a time where engagement and attainment declines for some children due to the differences they experience between settings in relation to pedagogy, support and curriculum content.

1.4 Interventions featured in this study

This study sought to evaluate the efficacy of three interventions – *Reading Ambassadors*, *Read Write Inc: Fresh Start*, and the *After School Reading Club* – used to support and develop children’s reading skills in my setting at the point of transition to secondary school. The interventions are described in the table below. A more detailed discussion of the interventions can be found in chapter four.

Table 1. Brief Description of Reading Interventions

Intervention	Brief Description
Reading Ambassadors	<p>The <i>Reading Ambassadors</i> programme ran throughout the school year from September until the end of May.</p> <p>The programme had been running in various forms for several years, with the support of the school librarian and English Department staff as a means of encouraging reading for pleasure in new first year pupils and providing opportunities to work with young people for children in sixth year.</p>

	<p>Participants were identified for this intervention through analysis of Primary 7 transition data including SIMD data and teacher professional judgement. As the intervention was funded by the pupil equity fund, children in SIMD 1 and 2 were prioritised. <i>Add your role. Relationship to children.</i></p>
Read, Write Inc	<p>Read Write Inc: Fresh start is a phonics-based intervention for older children.</p> <p>The intervention ran from September to May.</p> <p>Children were extracted from English to form RWI: Fresh Start class and were supported by class teacher and Additional Support Needs Assistant. Children focused on the programme for 3 of their 4 periods of English per week, with 4th period retained for library visits to encourage personal reading.</p> <p>Participants were identified through analysis of Primary 7 transition data, including SIMD data and teacher professional judgement. This intervention was provided by the local authority.</p>
The After School Reading Club	<p>The <i>After School Reading Club</i> was an intervention developed to provide children with an improved literacy environment.</p> <p>The intervention shared many features of the <i>Reading Ambassadors</i> intervention, but the key difference was that attendance at the <i>After School Reading Club</i> was voluntary. The rationale behind this intervention was that children who were either struggling or reluctant readers - or both - could attend and read texts that they enjoyed in a more relaxed, low-stakes environment.</p>

	This intervention was also funded by the pupil equity fund and any child in S1 was welcome to attend. Some children were encouraged to attend by the Depute Headteacher and PT Pupil Support for S1.
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Both *Reading Ambassadors* and the *After School Reading Club* are interventions developed and implemented in collaboration with colleagues from across the cluster. They emerged from research into reading as social practice and aimed to support children to improve as readers by developing a love of reading. *Reading Ambassadors* took place during participants' class library time once per week. The *After School Reading Club* met one evening per week after school and attendance was voluntary. *Read Write Inc: Fresh Start* was an intervention introduced centrally by the local authority and focused on phonics. A more complete description of each intervention can be found in chapter four.

1.5 Research Questions

The research and policy discussed above emphasises the need for greater study around reading interventions at transition from primary to secondary school. This thesis intends to contribute to the limited discussion around how to support struggling and reluctant readers at transition. The research question below has been produced to help to answer this query:

What were the experiences of struggling and reluctant readers at transition of three interventions, particularly in relation to the dimensions of the three-domains model, namely; cognitive knowledge and skills; identity and agency; and social and cultural capital?

The first part of the question is designed to interrogate whether reading interventions at transition support improved attainment for children. The literature reviewed for this chapter points to attainment in literacy being necessary for success in several subject areas and for its positive impact on

learner identity. The second part of the question has been generated to assess the impact reading interventions have on learners' views of themselves as readers. Again, the literature referred to in this chapter highlights the importance of being and viewing oneself as a reader and that reading opens doors to desirable social and economic domains. Finally, the third part of the question relates to social and cultural capital, and whether the interventions value the different assets children bring to school as readers from their homes and communities. Each of these questions is answered in the context of Primary/ Secondary transition and consider how key themes of power, access and belonging feature across each intervention.

1.6 Chapter Summary

This chapter has provided context on the national policy context around teaching reading in Scotland. It has identified tensions that exist within local authority and school-based approaches to teaching reading, particularly those that arise at transition to secondary school and affect children identified as struggling or reluctant readers. Additionally, it has provided context around transition and identified this as an area that would benefit from further research. It also served to locate the research problem statement into a local context, ensuring relevance to this study. Finally, this chapter has problematised the issue of how to support struggling and reluctant readers at transition to ensure they receive the right support at the right time and can flourish at secondary school.

Chapter Two: Theoretical Framework

2.0 Chapter Overview

The aim of this chapter is to present Bourdieu's theory of social capital as the main theoretical concept relevant to this thesis. Subsequently, the chapter provides a rationale for the use of Pierre Bourdieu's theories of social and cultural capital (1973), and the Strathclyde Three Domains Tool (Ellis & Smith, 2017) as the theoretical lens for this project. This chapter provides a historical overview of Bourdieu's theories of social and cultural capital and how they circulate within the New Literacy Studies presented by Street, Heath and Gee. It then brings together Bourdieu's theory of cultural capital with the Three Domains Tool to understand children's responses to the reading interventions they accessed.

2.1 Bourdieu: Historical Context

The theory of cultural capital in education was first introduced by Bourdieu, in collaboration with Jean-Claude Passeron, in 1964 (Robbins, 2005). This theory claimed that the education system itself can entrench and perpetuate class differences and inequalities as children from homes and families with cultural capital reflected by the school are more likely to succeed. Robbins also discusses how Bourdieu's own school experiences, moving from a provincial school to a well-regarded school in Paris, helped to shape his thinking around the differences between language used at home and used in school and the way that children assimilate to the dominant, valuable form of language used in the context. Bourdieu's experience demonstrated the way that less valued language practices are dropped in favour of dominant practices to help children fit in or assimilate to the prevailing culture. This links to the five stories of literacy presented in the prologue, featured especially Shane, Holly and Paul's stories. They possessed language practices that differed from the norm and their experience demonstrate that what Bourdieu experienced is still an ongoing issue in schools and wider society.

Bourdieu's work in Algeria (1958) helped develop his understanding of acculturation; a process of change that occurs when adapting to a dominant social or cultural practice. According to Robbins (2005) he "recognized that French colonial intervention had forced rural and nomadic tribespeople to modify their attitudes and behaviour in order to adjust to living in Algiers" (p. 16). This helped to shape Bourdieu's thinking around dominant forms of language referred to in the previous paragraph. This is important in the context of this study as part of the reason why some of the children featured in this study were labelled as "struggling" or "reluctant" readers was because they found it difficult to fully adapt to school-based literacy practices that differed from their own home and community-based practices.

The ideas developed and shared by Bourdieu have heavily influenced, and continue to influence, educational researchers (Murphy & Costa, 2016), with concepts such as social and cultural capital, and field, being particularly relevant to this study. Sallaz and Zavisca (2007) discussed the impact Bourdieu's work has had on research in American sociology, and Halsey (2004) reported Bourdieu to be among the most cited authors in the three main sociological research journals in 2000. Bourdieu is key to this study as his identification of dominant forms of literacy provides a lens through which the experiences of children who participated in the interventions featured in this study can be viewed.

2.2 Bourdieu: Forms of Capital

Bourdieu (1986) considers that it is "impossible to account for the structure and functioning of the social world unless one reintroduces capital in all its forms and not solely in the one form recognized by economic theory" (p. 15). He states that "capital is accumulated labour" (p. 15) and argues that the reductive notion that the only valuable exchange is characterised by commerce or trade for profit diminishes all other types of exchange. In other words, he critiques the notion that any exchange is only

important if it results in financial gain. Instead, Bourdieu argues for the value of cultural capital; exchanges which take place where there is no material enrichment.

Bourdieu (1986) describes three fundamental types of capital: economic capital; cultural capital; and social capital. Economic capital is described as readily exchangeable for money and exemplified through possessions including finance and property. Cultural capital can be traded for economic capital and is represented by concepts like educational and vocational qualifications. Additionally, social capital is positioned as consisting of connections and obligations to and within valuable communities and peer groups and can, in certain circumstances, be converted into economic capital. It is also important to note the entanglement that exists within these concepts. Certain cultural capital can be used to navigate social interactions and networks while other cultural capital can stall or inhibit this. Furthermore, certain social or cultural capital can be leveraged to a certain degree to move in and out of different economic statuses. Economic capital can buy access to powerful cultural and social capitals that could facilitate further economic, class, cultural or social mobility.

It is also important to address Bourdieu's concepts such as habitus and field as they underpin his theory of capital which forms a core component in the theoretical framework of this study. Hilgers and Mangez (2015) define "field" as a "tool for explaining and understanding the social world" (p. 1). In this study the field can be defined as the school community, including not just the school building itself, but the reach that the school as an institution has into the lives of the children and families it serves. This means the school can effectively be present in the lives of children and their families in the evenings through homework or extracurricular activities. However, school can also influence conversations and relationships in homes as children assimilate to the dominant forms of literacy and communication. For instance, Nollet (2003) argues that "The school's role is to act as a microcosm of society. This is why the education system is duty bound to encourage social heterogeneity both in the classroom and in and

among the various schools” (p. 16). Therefore, experiences of inequality that are present in society can also be present in, and reinforced by, institutions such as schools.

In describing the relationship between field and capital, Grenfell (2009) proposes that capital: is the currency of the Field: it fuels its operations and defines what is included and excluded from it; it is the means by which field products and processes are valued and not valued; and defines how those present in the Field need to accrue status and/or power in order to exert control over it (p. 19).

Furthermore, Grenfell clarifies that capital “can only be understood in terms of Bourdieu field theory as a whole” (p. 23). Therefore, in the context of this study, the school, as both a physical place and space and an institutionalised culture of teaching and learning, and its actors including teachers and peers, determine the legitimacy of the different types of capital deployed by children.

Turning to Bourdieu’s theory of habitus, Costa and Murphy (2015) propose that habitus is “a complex social process in which individual and collective ever-structuring dispositions develop in practice to justify individuals’ perspectives, values, actions and social positions” (p.4). Costa and Murphy also state that habitus is an important tool in helping researchers and educators to understand inequality. Furthermore Huang (2019) argues that an individual’s knowledge originates from “a specific culture that an individual lives in. By way of example, a working-class person will have a particular, class-based understanding of the world; this will be different to the world view of people from the middle class” (p. 48). Again, when considered in the context of this study, and positioning the school community as the participants’ field, the differences in habitus from other, more affluent peers makes the school landscape difficult to navigate for some children.

Janks (2004) usefully pulls these threads together through her discussion of the “linguistic market” (Bourdieu, 1991, p. 54). This characterises literacy as a commodity that can be exchanged or

spent within the “field”, in this case the school the children attend. The habitus of each child, their experiences, interactions with the world, economic circumstances and many other factors interact with the field to determine the value of the capital they can deploy.

In the following sections, I will discuss how Bourdieu’s concepts of social and cultural capital circulate within education and literacy.

2.2.1 Bourdieu: Social and Cultural Capital

Bourdieu (1986) positions social capital as membership of groups and networks where members are entitled to a level of material or symbolic support or backing. The amount of social capital an individual possesses depends on the extent of those networks and, in turn, the extent of the social, cultural, and economic capital possessed by other group members. An example of this could be a child with parents who can afford a tutor for a subject and thus enters the top class or group. The friendships and connections they make there are, in part, due to the way their economic capital has been deployed to access social and cultural goods.

Robbins (2005) discusses the fact that Bourdieu’s conceptualisation of capital stems from his own experiences of the differences in dialect he noted between his own regional dialect and that of his classmates in boarding school. He observed differences in language practices used in family or community settings and language practices used in professional or public spaces, considering this to be a clash between natural and artificial language practices. This is significant for this study as the children who participated in the interventions have different backgrounds and it is possible that the further their own literacy practices are from school-based practices, the more difficult they may find it to succeed. Bourdieu’s early research focuses on acculturation – the assimilation from one culture to a more dominant one. Robbins states that the concept of social capital emerged from Bourdieu’s observation of social differentiation and his efforts to find a way to define the process of acculturation. Robbins also

states that Bourdieu's research considers that "social and cultural differences are inseparable and that, through time, the social which is synonymous with natural or indigenous culture, is modified by degrees of initiation into artificial, acquired culture." (p. 23). This research has implications for both literacy and reading. The New London Group sought to address these implications through the new literacy studies (Gee, 1990; Street, 1994) which presented literacy as a social and cultural practice, entangled with economic and class positions. Cultural capital can be seen in the way we deploy our level of education, the style of our speech and even how we dress. In a school setting, this can be seen in practices like adherence to, or rejection of, a school uniform policy or the willingness, or lack thereof, to participate in group and class discussions. Our social capital emerges from our connections and social networks and can be used to enact positive outcomes from interactions with our peers. In a school setting this could present as the opportunity to collaborate on assignments or discussions about how to succeed in subject areas.

Murray (2000) positions the concept of cultural capital as being one of Bourdieu's "most distinctive contributions to critical theory" (p. 100). Murray also views Bourdieu's theory of capital through an economic lens but considers that it relates more to the idea of wealth than capital. Murray also considers the fact that social capital is only one form of capital and cannot be conflated with all forms of capital an individual may possess.

Bourdieu (1986) considers that our ability to accumulate social capital can be dependent on the social conditions of society and our own social class. He also argues that our ability to acquire the appropriate cultural capital depends on our family circumstances at birth and throughout our childhood. Although not a linear trajectory, children from families with elevated levels of social class are more likely to accumulate desirable forms of capital. The school, as a social institution and a microcosm of a wider society and culture, contributes towards how learners' capital circulates, is recognised and valued, and used to inform and understand educational practice or support, including reading interventions.

Robbins also reminded social science researchers of the temporal sensitivity of social capital, stating that:

We have to be careful to ensure that, as social scientists, we are sensitive to the changing market of culture in which we participate and do not deploy the concept of 'cultural capital' statically – as an instrument of consecrated social science – in a way which might consolidate the social inequalities which it originally exposed (p. 27).

This urges researchers to exercise caution when examining cultural capital as to consider it a settled concept risks creating an autonomous perspective of the type of capital that is, and is not, valued.

2.2.2 Bourdieu: Education

The impact of Bourdieu on education cannot be understated, described by Murphy and Costa (2016) as “significant and sustained” (p. 1). They state that:

Bourdieu's work has been utilized to enhance our understandings of the ways in which the curriculum, both overt and hidden, along with pedagogies, and their implicit taken-for-granted cultural capitals, contribute to both the reproduction of inequality and its legitimization through the misrecognition of social experiences and cultural inheritance as individual capacities (p. 1).

This demonstrates the wide-ranging impact Bourdieu has had on various aspects of school life and education more generally. Murphy and Costa (2016) also contend that Bourdieu's influence on education can be explained by the fact that it featured so prominently within his own research but also because his analysis of key concepts provides inspiration for researchers. Bourdieu's development of concepts such as social capital, habitus and field, has provided, and continues to provide, a starting point for researchers in education. It has served to improve our understanding of curriculum, pedagogy, and

social capital, and how they can contribute to inequality. This is important as while education is a field of research, it is also comprised of many social institutions such as pre-schools, nurseries, schools, colleges and universities. Bourdieu (2018) states that;

it becomes necessary to study the laws that determine the tendency of structures to reproduce themselves by producing agents endowed with the system of predispositions which is capable of engendering practices adapted to the structures and thereby contributing to the reproduction of the structures (p. 56).

Bourdieu makes the case that it is the educational structures such as schools, who can unwittingly reinforce social inequality by privileging school-based literacy over children's home-based literacy practices. Furthermore, Nash (1990) states that Bourdieu makes it clear that "schooling does have its own power to shape consciousness, over and above the power of the family, and it is clear that the role of the school is acknowledged as active" (p. 435), demonstrating that school also has the power to be a force for addressing inequalities.

2.2.3 Bourdieu: Literacy

Literacy is considered by many to be a vehicle for social change and personal development and improvement. The concept of 'mere literacy' is explored by Cope and Kalantzis (2000). They state that 'mere literacy' remains centred on language only and usually only a singular national form of language at that' (p. 5). They go on to propose that this form of literacy is dependent on adherence to rules and exists as an 'authoritarian kind of pedagogy' (p. 5). This view of literacy contrasts with multiliteracies, a concept explored in more detail in chapter three, where language and literacy are more fluid and responsive to their cultural context. Cope et al., (2010), argue that the concept of multiliteracies moves us away from traditional, narrow definitions of subject areas such as reading and writing. They also argue that in a fast-paced, changing economy citizens must be multi-skilled and adaptable to change.

Carrington and Luke (1997) consider the work of Bourdieu in attempting to establish the importance of literacy on children's outcomes. They state that "The notion of capital as an index of relative social power, remains Bourdieu's principle contribution to contemporary understandings of literacy" (p. 101). They argue that despite extensive efforts, it is still difficult to identify which literacy practices will benefit children in a post-school environment.

Carrington and Luke (1997) also identify literacy as a key measure of success in different areas of society. They state that,

many national and regional politicians, parents and employers in the 'human capital' rationale, the belief that 'increased' literacy necessarily leads to increased economic productivity and national development with an array of 'trickle-down' effects that might include individual social mobility, increased intergenerational levels of wealth, and, in the instances of migrant and indigenous communities that have undergone historical modes of educational disenfranchisement, enhanced minority community development (p. 97).

This firmly constructs literacy as a means of increasing economic prosperity and of having significant social value, supporting people to improve their economic and personal circumstances (Green et al., 1994). Carrington and Luke (1997) suggest that literacy is also considered a crucial factor in the well-being and personal development of society members. They also argue that literacy has become a symbolic reference point for the success, or otherwise, of nations, local authorities, and schools. This implies that the interests and literacy practices learners bring with them to school are only valuable if they align with the form of literacy valued by the school. These questions around literacy and capital are important for this study as they help to identify factors that support and motivate children to read. They

also identify areas that teachers, school leaders, and policy makers could take note of in their processes for transition

Finally, Carrington and Luke (1997), also argue that successful application of social capital gained from school-based literacy is only possible if used in conjunction with other forms of capital. Therefore, my study aims to address whether the reading interventions offered in the context of our school support learners to apply their social capital.

2.2.4 Bourdieu: New Literacy Studies

Collins (2000) establishes links between the work of Bourdieu and the new literacy studies. The author states that Bourdieu's work around social capital aligns with arguments proposed by new literacy studies that question the dominance of the psychological interpretation of reading as the act of the individual, as well as challenging the assertion that schools function as a meritocracy.

Collins states that there is commonality between Bourdieu and new literacy studies in the way that both share “a political and sociological conception of the relations between language, identity, and institutional orders” (p. 70). He equates Gee’s (1996) comparison of home and school-based literacy practices with Bourdieu's comparison of working, and middle-class language practices. These views contrast with the mainstream view of literacy, where there is a direct correlation between expected progress in school-based literacy and expected progress in social and economic domains (Arendt et al., 2005). Collins states that this view is held by governments of English-speaking nations, particularly the USA and England, where high literacy rates are tied to high rates of employment and economic success (Johnson, 2004). It is also a view held by non-English speaking nations in the global south such as India, where research by Azam et al., (2013) highlights the increased earning power of males who are fluent in English.

Collins also argues that work associated with new literacy studies challenges the current orthodoxy in the field by arguing that literacy is not a neutral, isolated set of skills but a social practice. He again cites Gee's study (1996) in highlighting the fact that children experience conflict between home and school literacies and that multiple literacies are needed to navigate different social, academic and professional settings. Crucially, Collins states that Gee "argues against any reification of literacy or language, any tendency to view literacy or language as isolable communicative technologies, as skills which can simply be added to already-formed social subjects without challenging, perhaps disordering or disabling, prior discourses and identities" (p. 73). This helps to demonstrate Gee's position that home literacy practices should not be considered inferior to dominant practices valued by school. From Heath to Pahl & Rowsell, an increased attention to, and evidence base for, understanding literacy as a social practice has been developed and maintained over the past five decades.

2.2.5 Bourdieu: Home and Community Literacy Practices

The importance of home and community literacy practices is discussed by Luke (2010) who argues that schools must bridge the gap between home and school literacy. Luke argues that if literacy is to be a transformative feature of children's lives, enabling them to improve their social and economic circumstances, then there must be mutual understanding between the home and classroom. Additionally, Luke argues that this understanding must extend to content and pedagogy.

However, Luke contends that establishing a synergy between home and school literacy practices is made more difficult when schools try to use literacy to tackle social and economic inequality. He argues that this approach further entrenches the same inequalities it tries to remove as it positions school literacy as being dominant over home literacy. The degree to which this is the case determines the level of deficit children experience.

Finally, Luke states that,

a Bourdieuan view of literacy education would focus not just on which pedagogic practices might make a difference in the formation of habitus, their systems of objectification, logics of practice and so forth, but which differences make a difference in social fields of use (p. 667).

This is a key point in this study's context as Luke illustrates that it is not just the intervention that makes a difference to participants. Habitus, defined by Nash (1990) as “a system of embodied dispositions which generate practice in accordance with the structural principles of the social world” (p.432 - 433) is an important factor in determining which interventions may be likely to succeed. Similarly, children’s experiences and backgrounds can also play a pivotal role in the success, or otherwise, of the intervention. This is supported by the Strathclyde Three Domains Tool (Ellis & Smith, 2017), discussed in the next section, which supports teachers in noticing the specific needs children have in literacy development and encourages a child-centred approach.

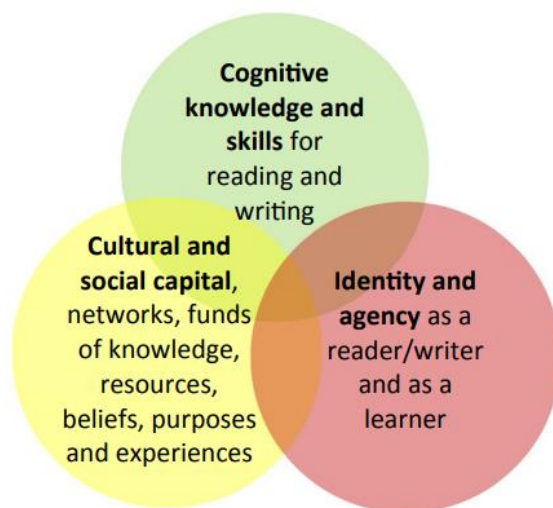
2.3 The Three Domains Tool

The Strathclyde Three Domains tool (Ellis & Smith, 2017) provides teachers with a framework for understanding the meaning of, and relationship between, cognitive knowledge and skills, cultural and social capital and personal-social identity. It links closely with Bourdieu’s concept of cultural and social capital by positioning these assets as,

the forms of knowledge, skills, education, experiences, resources and other non-economic home/community advantages that together can account for social mobility. It includes the relationships and social networks that can provide support, as well as the influence on the attitudes, sense of entitlement and linguistic resource children bring to school. (p. 86-87).

Ellis and Smith posit that the strength of each domain lies in the way that “together” they can improve outcomes for young people. They also reflect Bourdieu’s theory of social and cultural capital by stressing the importance of relationships and networks to children’s chances of success in school. This study takes into consideration the cultural and social capital of learners whose interests might be defined by interests in school but that are also defined by their home and community literacy practices. It considers that learners, impacted by local and national policies, approaches and systems that can see them labelled as “struggling” or “reluctant”, experience their interventions differently depending on the values held by the intervention.

Figure 1. *The Strathclyde 3 Domains Tool for literacy teaching and assessment*



While the Three Domains Tool acknowledges the importance of the cognitive knowledge and skills domain, it also emphasises the importance of two further domains - cultural capital and personal/ social identity – in the development of children as readers. This is an extension of Bourdieu’s work as it places value not only on the technical skills children need to acquire but also on their own identities and social and cultural capital. Crucially, and unlike the Simple View of Reading described in [chapter three](#), this model gives equal weighting and

importance to all 3 domains, demonstrating that development in reading requires support in all three areas. Furthermore, McGeown et al., (2015) discuss the importance of motivation as a crucial factor in children's progress as readers. They found that

Reading motivation and reading habits (in particular, fiction book reading) were found to predict additional variance in adolescents' reading comprehension, summarisation skills and text reading speed after accounting for variation in word reading skill. This suggests it is worthwhile identifying ways to boost adolescents' reading motivation and engagement in fiction book reading, as a route towards improving reading attainment. (p. 566).

This is important as it argues for the reading of fiction as a key method of improving children's relationship to reading (and texts) as well as their reader identities and, by extension, making personalisation and choice – what children choose and value in their reading - a crucial factor.

Ellis and Smith (2017), describe each of the three domains. The cognitive knowledge and skills domain attends to the ability to decode and make meaning from a wide range of texts, using cues and strategies such as phonics. They position this domain as being the one most closely linked to current classroom practice. They also reference the tension that exists in the profession between choosing to focus on one aspect of learning to read as opposed to finding the correct balance of different types of instruction for individual children (Ellis & Moss, 2014).

The cultural and social capital domain refers to home and community-based types of knowledge, resources, skills, experiences and meaning-making practices children can access beyond the school gates (Bourdieu, 1986). The authors cite Heath (1982), to describe the different types of literacy experience children encounter in their homes and communities, and

the impact these experiences have on their school lives. Importantly, Heath relates the experience of middle-class children as being closely related to the literacy experience of school whereas children from lower socio-economic backgrounds were often portrayed and perceived as being less fortunate. This not only impacts on children's views of themselves as readers, described later in this chapter, but could also result in teachers viewing the children in their classes through a class-based lens. The authors also contend that the greater the gap between the classroom and community literacy experience, the more difficult it is for learners to succeed in that environment. This relates to that question of the flow of social, cultural, and economic capital and the way that some children and their families can deploy all three forms of capital in a way that maintains their dominance but others, whose social capital may differ from the dominant form, find themselves at a disadvantage.

Finally, the personal and social identity domain considers the ways that children evaluate themselves, and are evaluated by others including teachers and peers, as learners and readers. It can be impacted by factors including, race, gender, disability and class, and considers that the texts children are interested in accessing and the literacy practices they value are shaped by their identity as human beings. Development of our identities as readers requires open, safe and brave spaces (Clark & Rumbold 2006; Jones, 2013; Moss, 2011; Snell & Cushing, 2022) and it cannot be imposed or defined by means of a narrow school experience. Children are more likely to engage with texts if they are of high interest and are chosen independently; they benefit from time and space to decide what motivates them to read; from seeing their lives reflected in the texts they experience; and, when reading aloud, being able to read and hear the text in their own voice.

The Three Domains Model has clear implications for classroom practice because, as mentioned earlier, a focus on phonics serves only to develop a set of technical skills and knowledge and may result in teachers missing, misrecognising, or devaluing the social and cultural benefits of reading interventions that children could possibly experience. Furthermore, a focus on cultural capital or social identity may lack the development of technical skills to access texts. Therefore, a more balanced, integrated approach, incorporating and giving equal priority to all 3 domains is necessary to develop a balanced, skilful and independent reader. This model is significant for this study. It brings together cognitivism, socio-cultural theory, and identity in a way that is coherent and pragmatic. Furthermore, it helps to characterise the strengths and development needs of children who were presented in the four stories of literacy, and the children who participated in this study.

2.4 Chapter Summary

This chapter has outlined the theoretical lens for this thesis, establishing Pierre Bourdieu's concepts of social and cultural capital as the central theoretical lens. This chapter then discussed Bourdieu's theories of social and cultural capital, how they circulate within new literacy studies and the clash between autonomous and ideological models of literacy, before presenting the Three Domains Tool and establishing its place as part of this study's theoretical framework. By viewing this study and the data it generated through the composite lens comprising Bourdieu and the Three Domains Tool, the value of children's experiences of reading interventions can be found in their cultural capital and attainment.

Chapter Three: Literature Review

3.0 Chapter Overview

This literature review examines the academic, pedagogic and pastoral arguments around reading, and teachers' approaches to supporting struggling and reluctant readers at the point of their transition to secondary school in Scotland. It explores different conceptualisations of reading, and its position within literacy in general. There is not universal agreement among theorists or within the teaching profession regarding the best approach to take when teaching reading and when supporting struggling or reluctant readers (Brooks, 2022; Wyse & Bradbury, 2022; Wyse & Bradbury, 2023). Furthermore, this review attempts to unpack the importance of learner, and reader, identity in the context of poverty and the poverty related attainment gap. The ambition to close the poverty related attainment gap has been present at the heart of Scottish education for almost a decade and has led to a sustained focus on supporting learners from SIMD 1 and 2, with significant funds used by schools to achieve this end. Education Scotland (2017a) states that:

Strategic Equity Funding is provided through the £1 billion Attainment Scotland Fund to support education recovery and tackle the poverty related attainment gap. All 32 local authority areas have a clear role to play and will share £43 million annually, to invest in approaches to achieving the mission of the Scottish Attainment Challenge.

With regards to reading, in my local authority, these funds were often spent on programmes or interventions related to technical aspects of reading, such as phonics. Finally, this chapter also considers the importance of reading at transition, the focus of the data gathered and shared to support teachers' understanding of reading attainment and of children as readers, and the interventions teachers can use to support children who have been identified as struggling or reluctant readers. It is important to note

that in Scotland, there is no mandated approach to the teaching of reading and no prescription around which approach to take or resources to use. Decisions around programmes are taken at local authority or school level. In the local context in which this study took place, the local authority funded and advocated the use of *Read Write Inc: Fresh Start* as a reading intervention to support older children. Therefore, while there is the appearance of autonomy, schools and teachers are still driven by the resources provided and decisions around these are often made based on the impact they will have on attainment data at scale.

3.1 Reading in Teaching and Research

Reading, and the teaching of reading, is widely considered to be of paramount importance in children's lives (Brooks, 2023; Ellis, 2007; Hoover & Gough, 1990; Scarborough, 2001; Stuart, 2006; Wyse & Bradbury, 2022). From their earliest experiences of school, performance in reading is one of the central measures by which children are defined, and define themselves, as learners. Hall (2010) contends that children whose performance deems that they are struggling, are less likely to seek support to improve due to the stigma attached to finding reading challenging. She argues "struggling" readers may conclude that they must choose between "improving their reading comprehension abilities and being socially positioned in a negative light" (p. 1794). Also, Jones (2013) suggests that children can often define themselves through their performance as readers and through how they relate to the content of the texts they experience. Analysing texts accessed by young readers, Jones states:

Young readers whose identities as children differ from the images embedded in the texts... may have various difficulties in relating seriously to these books. For all children there may exist the practical problem of knowing how to treat these images while taking

part in reading instruction based on them, in such a way as to appear to be concurring with the school-endorsed portrayals in the texts. (p. 205)

This demonstrates that texts can have an impact on how a child sees themselves in line with what schools portray as an expectation of a normal setting, circumstances or behaviour. It also suggests that the literacy practices, provision, and interventions that schools design or adopt can have implications for learners' identities and social practices over and above their knowledge acquisition and skills development.

Therefore, the ability to read is also closely tied with the ability to successfully acquire knowledge. The fact that reading and learning are held in such high regard, and are presented as impactful, must logically exist in tandem with the consideration that being classed as a struggling or reluctant reader would negatively impact upon a learner's view of themselves (Hall, 2010). Additionally, Hall also suggests that an outright rejection of reading as a valued skill could lead to a person experiencing poorer outcomes not only in education but in other areas of society such as employment, social standing and health.

In research, reading is studied in both educational psychology and in social science. These distinct views of reading are presented by Street (1984) as the autonomous model, the traditional psychological cognitive tradition, and the ideological model, positioned within new literacy studies (Gee, 1991; Street, 1994).

Hoover and Gough's 'Simple View of Reading' (1990) presents an educational psychology approach to understanding the autonomous view of reading, by presenting the actual act of reading as decoding and comprehension, locating reading firmly within the cognitive skills domain. Hoover and Gough state that "the simple view does not reduce reading to decoding but asserts that reading necessarily involves the full set of linguistic skills, such as

parsing, bridging, and discourse building; decoding in the absence of these skills is not reading” (p. 128). The authors argue that for the act to be defined as reading it must consist of actions that a non-reader could not make. Furthermore, they argue that decoding is vital as, in its absence, linguistic comprehension is rendered meaningless. Hoover and Gough also agree that reading is a complex activity, where many different factors including imagining, problem solving, thinking and reasoning are involved in making meaning from a text. However, they argue that the aforementioned factors can be successfully demonstrated by non-readers. Therefore, the only elements of reading that are responses solely to the text and that do not draw on external influences are decoding, where a reader applies knowledge of letter/ sound combinations, and linguistic comprehension, where a reader makes meaning from words and sentences in a text.

In social sciences, reading is presented in a different way. Bloome (1983) states that reading is both a social and cognitive process. He argues that reading goes beyond the writer's simple expression of ideas and the reader's understanding of those ideas. Furthermore, Bloome proposes that reading is not just about the extraction of meaning from a text; it can also be about forming relationships, establishing social groupings and demonstrating identity and power. Additionally, Street (2006), considers the autonomous model to be the imposition of the literacy practices of a powerful group within society on those who are less powerful within that same group. He argues that literacy practices are not fixed, and vary depending on culture, class and context. Street contends that “in practice literacy varies from one context to another and from one culture to another and so, therefore, do the effects of different literacies and different conditions” (p. 1). This argument runs counter to that presented by Hoover and Gough, discussed in the previous paragraph, and positions literacy as a social phenomenon that takes different shapes in different contexts.

The different models of literacy and reading presented by Hoover and Gough (1990) and Street (2006) represent the dominant discourses related to literacy studies that persist in contemporary debates about literacy education. Case-in-point: while reading for pleasure is garnering more and more interest (and an increasing evidence-base), synthetic phonics and the "science of reading" are also still posited as solutions to "the literacy problem". The cognitive-sociocultural binary continues in policy and practice. They represent a binary argument that, as mentioned in the introduction to this study, has perpetuated over several decades. For practitioners, this argument can be unhelpful. While the Simple View of Reading acknowledges the complexities of reading it places greater emphasis on decoding and linguistic comprehension and only considers these components as reading. The ideological model presented by Street (1984), considers the impact of external factors on reading but is sometimes misrepresented as the opposite of the Simple View of Reading. In summary, both approaches acknowledge the importance of the other, but in discourse these commonalities are not always foregrounded, making the reading instruction landscape difficult for practitioners to navigate. In our current context, increasing policy and public discourse on synthetic phonics and the "science of reading" are emerging, making these questions about appropriate and effective literacy support particularly important.

In Scottish classrooms, reading can be positioned in different ways by different parts of the education system. For learners in pre-school early years settings, reading can be focused on talking about books and shared reading experiences and meaning making. At this stage it is important for children to learn about concepts of print (Justice & Sofka, 2010), to develop phonological awareness (Torgeson, et al., 2019), to develop a love of reading (Sosu & Ellis, 2014), for teachers to support development oral language (Howieson & Iannelli, 2008), and to develop a love of reading through reading for pleasure (Cremin, et al., 2009).

In the early stages of primary school, Primary 1 and 2, children may progress to learning to decode, with greater attention paid to development of phonemic awareness and phonics (Stuart, 2006), and to morpheme awareness and development (Deacon & Bryant, 2006). This represents the development of children's linguistic knowledge of, and skill in using, the mechanics of language. Progression through the Broad General Education into middle and upper primary, and eventually secondary school, sees the focus of reading instruction shift towards reading to learn. This can involve increased focus on explicit teaching of reading comprehension strategies and discussion, analysis, and deconstruction of literature (Snow, 2002). Scotland's Curriculum for Excellence advocates a broad definition of a text. Therefore, novels, games, short stories, drama scripts, poetry and more, are all considered valid and appropriate vehicles for teaching children to develop their fluency and comprehension and to promote a lifelong love of reading. During this phase a greater emphasis is often placed on abstract thinking and communication depending on the conventions of the literacy context. While these descriptions characterise the typical age and stage appropriate foci, it is important to note that learners do not develop in these components of reading in isolation. Scarborough (2001) explains this through the portrayal of the 'Reading Rope'. This references the fact that components of reading weave together in support of one another and develop simultaneously.

3.2 Different Views of Reading: Exploring Psychological and Cognitive Perspectives

The autonomous approach to teaching reading, as a cognitive function, is one approach taken in schools and it is claimed by Street (2006) to be the form of reading most valued by those who hold power in our society. This view of reading commonly takes the form of children learning letter-sound combinations, applying this knowledge to an age and stage specific text, and then being tested to determine their progress in phonics. Street (1984) contends that the autonomous model views reading as a construct to be learned as opposed to being a social

process or practice. It defines which practices are correct and which are incorrect and reinforces the benefits of readers learning cognitive skills to convey knowledge. Teachers often rely on this approach as it is systematic and represents a successful early step for many children in their journey to becoming readers. However, an over-reliance on this approach can come at the expense of ignoring the skills and experiences gained by learners outside of school in their homes, peer groups and wider communities (Moll et al, 1992).

The autonomous approach to reading instruction is built upon the 'Five Pillars of Reading' as determined by the National Reading Panel (NRP) (1999). Established by United States Congress in 1997, the NRP produced findings that identified five central pillars of reading instruction underpinned by research. They considered phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension to be the key components in teaching children how to read. Since the publication of these findings – 1999 onwards – these five pillars have become increasingly regarded as the most important aspects of reading instruction in countries with predominantly English-speaking populations such as the USA, the UK, Australia and Canada. However, the focus on the Five Pillars as the main feature of early reading instruction, does not always adequately prepare children to tackle more difficult texts post-transition. Fang (2008) comments that "In primary grades, students are exposed primarily to storybooks whereas in intermediate grades the reading materials that students encounter become more heavily dominated by expository texts" (p. 476). Therefore, it can be argued that it is in the jump from learning to read to reading to learn that over-reliance on the five pillars becomes a flawed approach. The transition from primary to secondary as a reader involves learning to manage and navigate the language of texts in more sophisticated ways (Christie, 1998; Wissman, 2021) and if learners do not have the cultural capital to access the more abstract concepts dealt with by progressively more difficult texts, then they may experience lower attainment and,

subsequently, poorer educational outcomes. Furthermore, in the context featured in this study, as children progress to upper school the practice of making meaning from a text can be heavily led by the teacher rather than the reader. This can restrict opportunities for children to air their opinions and can make them feel that their ideas and opinions on texts - and within them characters, main ideas, key themes and arguments – are not important. It also potentially restricts their opportunities to independently interrogate a text on a critical level, and arrive at their own conclusions, based on their own ideas, opinions and experiences. Additionally, if the autonomous model is the only lens through which we view reading, then it can only preserve the power of those who comply with its principles or technical frameworks. For learners whose community or household literacy practices do not reflect the same values and approach as the autonomous model, it can be difficult to succeed (Moll & Diaz, 1983; Jones 2013). Furthermore, given that many teachers use assessment of literacy performance to rank pupils (for pupils post primary-secondary transition this can mean placing them in lower ability sections, restricting subject choice, restricting access to valued peer networks and limiting positive outcomes), then literacy and reading are reduced to being individual, performative activities.

The autonomous model is also supported by educational psychologists and their methods of research and interpretation of data. The benefits of teaching reading as a cognitive function are that it can be reduced to a set of rules that learners can progress through. It can make assessment a more straightforward process and allow for early identification of learners who are struggling in the technical skills domain of reading. However, this approach often fails to take account of knowledge and practices learners bring from home or the community as well as discounting that language and literacy learning are not always stable and bound to the contexts within which they occur.

Contrastingly, if literacy is to be viewed as a social practice rather than as a psychological construct alone, then educators could consider that what we teach in schools is only one version of literacy and not necessarily the only version with any value or significance in the lives of the children we teach. When framed as a social process, reading is typically illustrated as a practice where learners choose their own texts, develop their own meaning from what they read and read without pressure to complete a task. That is, while comprehension is a cognitive phenomenon, it is also a social phenomenon. Reducing comprehension to a narrow, cognitive function may not meet the needs of socio-economically marginalised children whose home and community literacy practices are most likely to differ from those valued by schools (Heath, 1983; Luke, 2016; Snell & Cushing, 2022).

Moll et al., (1992) argue that to understand and value the literacies important in the lives of learners in our schools we must be open to all forms of literacy and must adjust the curriculum and classroom instruction accordingly. They discuss funds of knowledge, defining it as “historically accumulated and culturally developed bodies of knowledge and skills essential for household or individual functioning and well-being” (p. 133). Teachers could benefit from recognising that households contain both cultural and cognitive resources which have the potential to be utilised in classroom practice. Household funds of knowledge are broad and diverse. Children come to school equipped with highly developed understanding in areas important to their lives beyond school. By recognising this we could deliver a more ethnographically informed means of classroom instruction. While there are challenges in replicating Moll’s study, it is possible to use the principles to improve the quality of the information schools gather at points of transition to help teachers find more effective ways to implement effective reading instruction. This could help teachers frame classroom practice more effectively and help meet the needs of all learners by valuing more than one approach and

offering children more ways to succeed in school. This notion of "social practices" came into view during the "Social Turn" which considers the shifting, untethered nature of literacy.

3.3 The Social Turn

The "Social Turn" in literacy studies (Gee, 1991; Street, 1994) considers that literacy is less about individuals developing a defined, dominant set of skills and more about viewing literacy as a social practice focused on interactions. Gee (1999) states that in recent times we have witnessed "a massive "social turn" away from a focus on individual behavior (e.g., the behaviorism of the first half of the 20th century) and individual minds (e.g., the cognitivism of the middle part of the century) toward a focus on social and cultural interaction' (p. 61). By stressing the importance of "interaction", Gee makes the case for the positioning of literacy as a social practice located in children's lives and experiences and creates the possibility of there being different literacies and different ways of being literate. The social turn considers the shifting nature of literacy, where different practices and rules become dominant in different time periods and different spaces. It also considers the importance of new literacies, such as digital literacy, home literacy and multi-literacies, which are variable and aligned with social practices that can be viewed through a temporal, spatial, or place-based lens. Chakrabarty (2020) states that "With the rapid development of technology, it has now become necessary to consider multimodality or new modes of communication like computers, mobile phones and so on into the definitions of literacy" (p. 2). This is important for educators as the existence of new modes of communication encourages us to think carefully about the way children access and produce texts. Finally, Street (1994) contrasts this approach with the autonomous model of literacy by positioning it as the ideological model of literacy. He argues that "We're talking about the fact that people in society not only practise reading and writing but they have models and ideas about it and that there are contests over them" (p. 115). Street's reference to 'contests'

reflects the understanding that what is considered important within this definition is variable, open to change, and dependent on when and where this consideration is made. It also disputes the claim of neutrality made by the autonomous model, stating that it is the very claim of neutrality that positions it as an ideology.

New Literacy Studies (NLS) is one of many schools of thought to emerge from the social turn and represents a shift in focus away from the private, individual interactions towards social interactions (Gee, 1999). NLS contends that all forms of literacy, including reading, writing and the act of meaning making, are positioned as a social practice. Street (2006) also presents NLS in relation to literacy as a social practice, acknowledging multiliteracies and the way they are impacted by time and place, but also makes explicit links to power and identity. Street also acknowledges that literacy practices such as reading and writing are an important part of the power dynamic associated with peer, educational and social relationships. The overlap between the autonomous and ideological models, situated in common literacy practices such as reading and writing, have led to calls to acknowledge the impact that the autonomous model has on literacy practices and across policy and practice in education. Brandt and Clinton (2002) discuss this overlap by considering that despite the way that reading is autonomous in some areas and social in others "it was all obviously literacy" (p. 341). This helps to illustrate the connection between the autonomous and ideological models presented by Street (1984) and conveys that the teaching of reading is not a dichotomy or a choice to be made as there is interdependence between both models. Furthermore, it is argued that while NLS has demonstrated the range and variance of literacy practices, it has not yet successfully rationalised the commonalities that exist across a wide range of studies from various contexts (Collins & Blot, 2002).

Home literacies describes the home and community-based literacy practices of a particular group. It can include home literacy practices that involve family members, parental

attitudes to school and learning, and the family resources an individual can draw on such as conversations, experiences, and access to a range of artifacts such as texts, games and films. The impact and perceived quality of these experiences can be affected by factors such as parental literacy levels, family income and parental engagement with school. Weigel et al. (2006) state that "The importance of the home literacy environment as a contributor to young children's emergent literacy is grounded in the fact that the home serves as a setting in which language and literacy are first encountered" (p. 358). This is supported by the fact that it is vital for children to take developmental steps in reading, writing and listening and talking before they formally start school (Curry et al., 2016), and McNaughton (2001) suggests that there can be an obvious attainment gap between children when they enter school as a result of differing literacy practices at home. While Heath (1983) argues that differences in home literacy practices do not mean that one approach is better than the other. This can mean that it is difficult for practitioners to support children whose literacy experience differs from an established norm.

Within the Social Turn, Multimodality refers to the way individuals engage with one another using different modes of communication such as those that are linguistic, spatial, visual, aural or gestural (Kress, 2003), recognising that communication is not limited to language. It also takes account of the increased use of technology to access, produce and augment texts. Furthermore, multimodality advocates incorporating more than simply linguistic resources when creating or accessing texts and that consideration should be given to a range of different modes appropriate to the context. Kessler (2006) supports this assertion, stating that teachers and researchers should consider "how people use a combination of modes in different contexts for different purposes" (p. 551). The rise in the use of technology such as tablets, mobile phones and games consoles means that children's literacy experiences are widely varied and are increasingly multimodal. The texts children access typically do not solely feature the written or

printed word. Instead, they can contain moving and still images, sound, a range of colours and multiple fonts. This increasingly means that the texts children engage with outside the classroom no longer typically reflect the texts they experience in school for learning or assessment. In addition, the rise in the use of technology has also impacted classroom practice, with practitioners now more likely to employ it as part of their day-to-day pedagogy and children using it to produce multimodal texts such as PowerPoint presentations, blogs and even short films (Kessler 2006). While multimodality is not a focus of this study, it is important to acknowledge and understand as part of the literacies that learners in the study use, draw upon, and relate to.

New Literacy Studies positions Critical Literacy as an approach to reading and creating texts which encourages individuals to consider ideas such as power, representation, attitudes and bias. It is a well-researched field that has a significant impact on education and classroom practice with respect to literacy and English. Cadeiro Kaplan (2002) states that a critical literacy approach to teaching reading "is designed to serve the interests of children and their historical context and place in the world" (p. 373), and that the alternative, autonomous approach is designed to produce functional members of the workforce. Therefore, Critical Literacy, and the question of who it "serves" can also be positioned as a vehicle for addressing social justice as it examines the way that language can be used to impact inter-personal, community and establishment relationships (Behrman, 2006). As mentioned in the wider discussion around NLS, critical literacy also addresses themes of power and recognises that the way readers use and receive language connects to their own values and biases (Janks, 1993). Janks (2000) positions four key standpoints that are important to critical literacy; domination, access, diversity and design. Her description of domination and access positions critical literacy as an attempt to understand how language preserves social positions and provides access to those positions

without reducing the importance of less powerful practices such as home and community-based literacy interactions. How these operate as part of literacy learning and support becomes evident in the data from this study, particularly as they pertain to understanding learners' experiences of the literacy interventions they participated in. Finally, reflecting the transient, shifting nature of what is important in the social turn, critical literacy is not a fixed theory and is subject to changes in ideas and attitudes in different times and spaces (Luke, 2000).

Digital literacy represents one of the more recent emergences in New Literacy Studies. Children's literacy experiences, both within and beyond the classroom, increasingly take place on digital platforms. They access a range of content online including news, blogs, databases, wiki entries and even homework and interactions with teachers and peers. Mills (2010) discusses the existence of a "changing emphasis from research of print-based reading and writing practices to include new textual practices that are mediated by digital technologies" (p. 247). Mills' description of textual practices being 'mediated' through technology conveys the importance of digital devices as they can be regarded as a filter through which a significant number of our literacy experiences pass. This digital "turn" demonstrates the case for a realignment of educators' understanding of what we mean by texts and our biases around our definition of what constitutes a quality text. Also, digital texts are often multi-modal, used with pictures, sound and gestures, portrayed within different spaces (Ranker, 2007). Furthermore, online experiences of text include reading and composing text messages, reading and creating e-zines, reading and creating fanfiction and reading and contributing to discussion forums and threads. The spike in popularity of digital communications is one of the central reasons why NLS has embraced the idea of literacy existing in formats other than simple text on a page (Kress, 2003). Significantly, the temporal lens of this study includes the school closures resulting from Covid-19. During this period, an extensive part of children's learning in the context featured in this

study took place online, meaning the use of digital texts became commonplace. In this moment, home-based literacy practices and school literacy practices had significant overlap.

The next section of this chapter will focus on how different types of literacy can be noticed and valued by practitioners in the classroom. It will also attempt to illustrate the importance of having a focus on cultural capital and learner identity alongside technical skills.

3.4 Learners' reader identities in the context of poverty and the poverty-related attainment gap

The concept of learner identity is important in considering how beneficial interventions are for learners. Reay (2009) states that "The working classes across the globe continue to have access to relatively low levels of the kind of material, cultural and psychological resources that aid educational success" (p. 399). She argues that people form their identities by relating and comparing themselves to others and that school is a key component of establishing our identities as individuals. Reay demonstrates the range of areas - "material, cultural and psychological" - where children may find themselves at a disadvantage when compared to their peers. Therefore, children who come from less affluent homes could view themselves as inferior to their peers when presented with the fact that they possess less valuable economic, cultural and social capital. Issues of social class are bound to learners collective and localised experiences. In this study, the participants, Andrew, Bree, Cara, Daniel, Erin and Fern, all reside in communities designated SIMD 1 or 2, suggesting there is a high level of disadvantage. When combined with their low socio-economic status, the assumptions provoked by their designation as struggling or reluctant readers, have been mainly negative. This is somewhat explained by Susu and Ellis (2014) who state, "considering the majority of low attainers are from disadvantaged households, the findings suggest that the cycle of social inequality will continue if

greater attention is not paid to closing the attainment gap” (p. 14). The link between socio-economic status and attainment reflects the discussion around Bourdieu and social capital in chapter 2.2.1 where it is stated that the likelihood of gaining valuable forms of capital is largely dependent on our social class and circumstances. This is acknowledged within the Three Domains Tool as valuing only cognitive knowledge and skills, a domain where children from more affluent backgrounds where literacy practices mirror those of school are more likely to succeed, excludes the forms of capital possessed by less affluent learners.

Additionally, Willis (1977) asserts that forcing young people from different backgrounds to mix in the same environment with the same rules and constraints highlights differences and forces our identities to emerge. Reay also argues that while identity has become understood as a far less rigid structure it is still evident that identity is impacted by social inequality and lack of access to resources. The school system defines successful learners as those who meet developmentally appropriate milestones and whose attainment is on track for their age and stage. Children with the “right kind” of social capital are judged positively by school staff because they fit the mainstream perception of what success should look like. Conversely, lower performing learners are defined in the school system as those who have difficulty meeting expectations, who fail to complete tasks they are given and who do not meet expectations of planned learning. These children can often be judged negatively by the school system. The learner identity held by pupils from lower socio-economic status (SES) backgrounds can be significantly different from their peers who live in more affluent circumstances and the view taken of them in school can reinforce their perceptions of themselves as learners. It can also have an impact on their aspirations and outcomes. This is supported by Calarco (2011), who discusses the way that children from more affluent families are more likely to actively seek help from teachers than their less affluent classmates, demonstrating how social, cultural and

economic capital can overlap. Calarco explains that this is because "In these settings (what Bourdieu calls fields), middle-class knowledge, skills, and competences become forms of cultural capital that can be used to produce meaningful situational advantages" (p. 863). This means that children from more affluent households can see their experiences and practices valued over those from less affluent circumstances. Furthermore, the author also discusses the positive response teachers have to this approach from children, resulting in more teacher pupil contact and greater likelihood of success in tasks. Also, Oakes (2005) indicates that, while the different levels of resources a family can access ultimately lead to inequality, these differences can be reinforced within the same school setting.

In this study's context, it is important to examine the way reading interventions can contribute to learners' identities. It is often common practice to extract children from mainstream classes to work on texts that are different from those accessed by their peers. It is conceivable that this approach, despite being designed and intended to support children's reading, may have the opposite effect, and instead has a further negative effect on their progress. This is supported by Boaler et al., (2000) whose study reported on the initial two years of a four-year longitudinal study on the impact on attitude and attainment of ability grouping in maths. The study concluded that grouping children by ability has the impact of lowering the attainment of children from poorer SES backgrounds as these groups typically feature children with fewer home and community resources to draw upon to support their learning in school, stating that "students are constructed as successes or failures by the set in which they are placed as well as the extent to which they conform to the expectations the teachers have of their set" (p. 19). The extraction or grouping that takes place to facilitate support can have unintended consequences and reinforce negative identities that children might possess. In the context of my local authority children who fall behind in phonics in term one of P1 are extracted

for extra support at the earliest opportunity. Ginsberg (2020) discusses the negative impact of struggling readers being placed on scripted reading interventions which serve only to reinforce their view of reading as a performative activity where they likely continue to meet with failure. He states that "The ways in which others position struggling readers can have dire consequences on reader confidence and behavior. In order to be identified as successful readers, students may believe they need to meet teacher- and school-sanctioned visions of success" (p. 2). This highlights the impact that our practices as teachers and the labels we place on children can have. Ginsberg's mention of "school-sanctioned visions of success" also highlights the narrow definition of success that can exist in schools and that this vision can be markedly different from how success would be defined in a child's home or community. Ginsberg (2020) also argues that when a student is labelled as a struggling reader the realisation that their teacher has positioned them in this way encourages them to exhibit behaviours that confirm their label. To avoid this self-fulfilling prophecy (Merton, 1948), Ginsberg advocates the use of innovative, non-traditional classroom practices such as video games, software development, video authoring and web browsing. These texts are more responsive to learners' needs because they relate more to areas that they value in their lives outside of school.

Testing, and the results it generates, can have a detrimental impact on the way a learner views themselves within the school context. Reay and William (1999) illustrate the way in which tests and assessments shape the way learners position themselves in relation to their peers and how they identify and value themselves as learners. They relate the familiar tale of a student who, despite being skilled in other areas of the curriculum and beyond the curriculum, views themselves as a failure because of a lack of success in spelling stating that, "cleverness is very clearly conflated with doing well in the SATs" (p. 348). The emphasis placed on success in literacy has a disproportionate effect on the pupils as it obscures the success they have in other

areas. Alongside teacher judgement, learners also assess themselves against each other. The perception of a successful student stems almost completely from their performance in tests and no account is taken of achievement in areas not considered academic (Reay & William, 1999).

Frankel et al., (2019) examines the impact of reading interventions on learners in the context of compulsory literacy intervention classes. She acknowledges that such interventions can be successful when literacy is viewed as a cognitive practice. However, she posits that these interventions can be detrimental to the participants' learner identity. She considers the fact that learners come to these interventions with varying experiences and backgrounds and position themselves as specific readers and are subsequently positioned by their classmates in relation to their own performance. Frankel et al., then consider the impact the positioning of the teacher has on the students and the intervention and analyses the impact of the teacher who considers that the purpose of the intervention is to change attitudes and habits of the students. They describe this purpose as being to "create literacy experiences that support expansive understandings of reading as agentic, engaged, and comprehension focused and that respond to the different perspectives and experiences that students bring with them to the classroom" (p. 226). This stance reinforces the student's perception of himself as a poor reader as the teacher's motivation is to show students why reading matters to him. This is compared against the position of the teacher who values her students' interests and seeks to engage in dialogue about what motivates her (Frankel et al., 2019). In both cases the approach of the teacher is crucial in either reinforcing or dispelling the learners' views of themselves as poor readers. In the context of this study, we consider how learners feel about the interventions they access and their impact upon their view of themselves. Children will feel more inclined to persist and will be more motivated by an intervention if they value – and are valued by - the reading community they are part of (Guthrie & Klauda 2014). This is important in the context of delivering reading

interventions in Scottish schools as it contrasts with the idea of learners being assigned to an intervention based on the results of a test which only assesses their performance from an extremely narrow perspective.

3.5 Understanding poverty and attainment

There is strong consensus between academics around the relationship between poverty and attainment and it has been the focus of successive UK and Scottish governments since before the turn of the millennium (Haberman, 2010; Hirsch, 2008; McKinney et al., 2012; Mowat, 2020). Despite this focus, the problem with poverty persists as it is complex, multi-faceted and impacts on a wide range of intersecting factors such as health, attitude to education and social mobility (Hirsch, 2008). The conversation around poverty in schools often focuses on deprivation, which has a broader focus than just income or finance and considers different types of poverty.

In 2023 Education Scotland released Scotland's Equity Toolkit (Education Scotland 2023). This resource aims to "support and guide efforts to improve outcomes for children and young people impacted by poverty, with a focus on tackling the poverty-related attainment gap" (p. 7). The resource acknowledges the inequalities that exist in the post-Covid landscape and considers poverty through several different lenses such as such as fuel poverty, digital poverty, hidden poverty, rural poverty, in-work poverty, food poverty and material poverty or deprivation. Each definition of poverty can impact a child's school experience, and the toolkit provides information and support on how to mitigate this in the school context.

McKinney et al (2012) also discusses the specific impacts of poverty on children, stating that children in poverty are less likely to be adequately clothed, to have sufficient food and to have enriching experiences beyond the classroom. Additionally, the House of Commons Scottish Affairs report 'Child Poverty in Scotland' (2008) described children born into poverty as being unable to escape a "cycle of

deprivation” meaning that their experience renders them and their children unable to improve upon the circumstances of their parents. Linking back to Bourdieu, this demonstrates that although economic capital and how it can be deployed is an important issue, social and cultural capital are also important in perpetuating this cycle.

The impact of poverty on children’s education is felt in the pedagogical approaches often taken in classrooms. It is argued by Ellis and Rowe (2020) that children need an approach that not only supports development of cognitive skills but one that also attends to their social and emotional needs, creating space for children’s ideas, thoughts and opinions to be heard. Furthermore, the top-down approach of many literacy programmes only serves to reinforce and entrench the differences between children who can comply with the conditions of the programme and those who cannot. This teacher-led/child-compliant approach creates a difficult, tension-filled classroom environment that can often lead to disruption and disengagement (Zeedyk et al., 2003). Ultimately it does not deliver improved attainment in literacy or reflect what disenfranchised children are capable of (Haberman, 1991). Additionally, Wilson et al., (2018) argue that “The persistent policy focus of addressing ‘deficits’ of young people unable to access higher education needs to shift towards challenging the structural barriers that can stunt such young people’s educational progress” (p. 3). This links to the stories of literacy presented in chapter one, where the impact of low expectations, poor teacher-pupil relationships, and behavioural expectations that stemmed from social class were keenly felt. Ellis and Rowe (2020), contend that a more socially situated approach, such as one which integrates the three domains tool described earlier in this chapter into teachers’ practice, can help to close the attainment gap.

3.6 The relationship between poverty, attainment, and reader identity: Problematising “struggling” and “reluctant” readers

Poverty is one factor that can impact attainment in literacy. Literacy attainment data consistently demonstrates poverty related patterns at all stages of primary school (Sosu & Ellis, 2014). They argue that "Considering that the majority of low attainers are from disadvantaged households, the findings suggest that the cycle of social inequality will continue if greater attention is not paid to closing the attainment gap" (p. 14). Sosu and Ellis make the explicit link between poverty and attainment, which mirrors the circumstances of the children in this study.

Additionally, the Scottish Government report, 'Growing up in Scotland: The Circumstances of Persistently Poor Children', (2010) presents data stating that 21% of children deemed persistently poor at birth had language development concerns, compared to 16% of temporarily poor children and 12% of children who experienced no poverty at all over the period. The report also describes a notable difference in vocabulary at ages 3 and 5 between learners from the highest and lowest deciles demonstrating the impact of poverty on a child's attainment over a sustained period. In Autumn 2012 the British Educational Research Association (BERA) stressed the importance of family finances and the influence of the mother's level of education and personal reading practices (Hartas, 2012). Mothers who read regularly and engage in reading reflective of reading practices taught and valued in schools are more likely to come from middle-class homes. They make an important contribution to the funds of knowledge of their children, meaning that those who are not regular readers contribute to their children in ways that are not always valued in school and develop capital that is ineffective when deployed in a school setting. Hartas also argues that "social class still shapes young children's progress through school ... which highlights the need for public debate on class and its impact on families." (p. 1) This can help teachers to conclude that social class makes it difficult for low-income families to escape or improve their circumstances as they are trapped in a vicious circle where "socio-economic inequality shapes the relationship between home learning and school outcomes." (p. 3)

Furthermore, definitions of poverty can be vague as they often fail to distinguish between poverty and social class. Children deemed to be living in poverty can suffer from cumulative disadvantage. They can experience a mixture of low funds of knowledge, low social and human capital, low expectations, and difficult household circumstances. 'Growing up in Scotland: The Circumstances of Persistently Poor Children' (2010) confirms that pupils in poverty have less resilience against cumulative disadvantage and families with lower socio-economic status are "likely to experience a range of other disadvantages - including low education" (p. viii). In my experience, the results driven approach to education, often prevalent in the Scottish context, can dictate that the most experienced staff are placed with classes where students are from more affluent backgrounds and parental expectations are higher. Similarly, in the cluster featured in this study, it has historically been the case that more experienced teachers are paired with classes whose parents are more likely to be focused on attainment and have the necessary social and cultural capital to navigate the institution and demand what they see as the best for their children. Consequently, less experienced staff are often paired with learners from backgrounds where parents are less able or less equipped to be involved in school life. These classes are less likely to be a source of parental complaints; engagement with report cards and parent information evenings is often low, resulting in less scrutiny of learning and teaching. Parents of these pupils are unlikely to see themselves as having the necessary cultural or social capital to influence the institution. Although not generalisable, these professional observations do help to expose the taken-for-granted patterns of social, cultural, and economic capitals in a local schooling context.

Hunter et al., (2018) argue that large policy shifts, such as the focus on closing the poverty related attainment gap in Scottish education "re-enforces a deficit model of young people and their families in which they are viewed as having intrinsically low aspirations" (p. 3). To tackle the impact of poverty, improve the life chances of children in poverty and narrow the gap, schools must strive to increase general attainment in literacy and numeracy and provide a gateway to higher attainment.

There must be an unrelenting focus on the quality of teaching and learning, a culture of high expectations and a culture of inclusion.

Finally, teachers and education professionals could benefit from an understanding that being economically poor does not automatically equate with being a poor reader. As stated previously, children from low SES households bring several highly developed literacy skills and strategies to school. Schools can benefit when they recognise, value and work with these skills and to align practice in school with practice from home. This is significant to this study as pupils from lower SES backgrounds are the target group for PEF interventions and the purpose of the interventions outlined previously is to support that group to develop as readers with the correct support.

3.7 The issue with labels: Problematising “struggling” and “reluctant” readers

When considering the tensions raised by the terms “struggling” and “reluctant” it is important to understand the impact such labels have on children. Green et al., (2005) define labels as “the recognition of differences and the assignment of social salience to those differences” (p. 197). The authors’ description of the “recognition of differences” suggests that not only are these “differences” acknowledged, but they are also given a level of “salience”, or importance, in the teacher’s understanding of the child. Therefore, in linking the work of Green et al., (2005) to the context of this study, the use of labels such as “struggling” and “reluctant” to define a child’s performance in reading is also rooted in a deficit mindset and has the effect of segregating them from their peers. In the case of RWI: Fresh Start, the secondary school structure meant that children were removed from their class and had restricted access to supportive networks and friendships, but even for those who remain in class, the designation of “struggling” or “reluctant” serves to reduce their social standing within particular contexts. Green et al., illustrate this through the responses of one of their interviewees who commented that “no one wanted to be associated with people with problems” (p. 202).

Gibbs and Elliot (2015), address the issue of labels more specifically in relation to reading difficulties. They posed the question "Does the way difficulties with reading are labelled affect the teachers' beliefs about their ability to intervene effectively?" (p. 2). The findings of this research suggested that a difference existed in terms of how teachers felt they could support children depending on how those children were labelled. Gibbs and Elliot consider that teachers consider themselves able to support children with defined, formal labels such as "dyslexia", more effectively than they can support children with a more generalised label such as "reading difficulties". This is perhaps explained by the fact that the label "dyslexia" suggests a clear course of action whereas "reading difficulties" is less well-defined and could be supported in a variety of ways. This mirrors the tensions around labelling children as "struggling" and "reluctant" as "struggling" readers may find that struggle exists because of speech and language acquisition, phonemic or phonological awareness, or gaps in phonics while a reluctance to read could stem from a child's "struggle" but could also be rooted from a variety of social factors, not least a child's in-school experience of reading. In addition, as mentioned in the previous paragraph, the labels "struggling" and "reluctant" are positioned in deficit thinking and imply that the perceived "problem" lies within the child, rather than in any pedagogical or environmental factors. The terms "struggling" and "reluctant" are also too generalised to support teachers in knowing how they can help children. Rather, teachers need to know the source of struggle or reluctance to read. This links to the Three Domains tool (Ellis and Smith, 2017) discussed in chapter two, where the "noticing" of where children's assets as well as development needs lie, could help to provide more meaningful, bespoke support for children.

Finally, Lauchlan and Boyle (2020), address the complex nature of labels and suggest that they function as a "necessary evil" (p. 1) in helping children with difficulties gain access to the support they require. Additionally, they consider that labels have the effect of lowering expectations of children in the eyes of their teachers, proposing that "the continued application of labels has been a factor in

perpetuating inequity in the sphere of inclusive education" (p. 2). This aligns with Rubie-Davies (2009), who argues that "there is widespread acceptance of the existence of teachers' expectations and of their importance for student learning" (p. 696). Lauchlan and Boyle explore the notion of the "application" of labels, emphasising that this is often an action done to children rather than with their consent. They further suggest that making children passive in the process of assigning labels can be responsible for "perpetuating inequity". This means that rather than providing children with the specific tools they need by removing barriers to learning, the assigning of labels continues and entrenches the cycle of unfairness some children - in this case those who have been assigned labels related to reading difficulties - find themselves in. This can be seen in relation to participants who could claim in some respects to be successful readers but who were labelled "struggling" or "reluctant" readers based on a narrow, performative view of reading based mainly on reading fluency. The complexity of labelling is also discussed by Ho (2004), who examines the pros and cons of labels, stating, "While being categorized or stated as having learning disabilities allows one to be formally protected by various disability mandates, there remain other negative social and political implications that are attached to such labelling" (p. 87). Ho refers to both the "social" and "political" implications of being labelled, recognising the possibility that labels can be responsible for children being treated as less than their peers on a personal and institutional level.

3.8 Transition

Transition is readily identified as a key aspect of children's lives (West et al., 2010; Bark & Brooks, 2016; Siddiqui et al., 2016; Mowat, 2018; Jindal-Snape et al., 2020). The importance of transition and the impact it can have on learners is further emphasised by Bryan et al., (2007) in a report commissioned by the Scottish Executive Education Department. They state that "Anecdotal and research evidence suggests that there is a dip in pupil attainment at the point of transition from primary to secondary school, with some children engaging less well with class teaching and school work" (p. 11).

This report raises the possibility that transition to secondary school can, for pupils who are judged to be performing well by their P7 teacher, lead to a "dip" resulting in lower attainment and lower levels of engagement with school. This can be caused by differences in the content of the curriculum, differences in the pedagogical approach taken by teachers and a reduction in the level of personal support pupils can access when they enter the secondary system (Bryan et al., 2007). Additionally, transition can be a significant and often stormy phase of a learner's journey. Children move from a nurturing environment where they have a high level of personal support from a teacher who typically knows them well as an individual, to a place where they work with professionals with whom they are less familiar and where there is often less academic support and increased expectation of independence (Hanewald, 2013).

In the cluster in which this study is located, the data gathered by the secondary school at transition, and interventions designed to bridge the primary and secondary curriculum typically focus on literacy and numeracy. As illustrated (Bryan & Traynor 2007), effective practice surrounding pedagogy in reading can lead to continued high attainment in S1, combatting the dip that traditionally occurs at transition (Mowat, 2018; Speering & Lennie, 1996). Mowat specifically addresses the problems faced by children with additional needs, stating that "supporting the transition for pupils with SEBN is complex" (p. 15). She goes on to argue that the "complex" nature of transition for children, particularly those with additional support needs, means that there is no universal solution due to each child potentially reacting differently to transition. There are, however, benefits in ensuring a sense of belonging and connectedness is felt by all children when they transfer to secondary school. By working to align the pedagogy of primary and secondary teachers, educators can prevent the academic issues that transition causes.

However, it would be limiting to focus on attainment data as the most important aspect of the data we gather on learners at transition. Speering and Lennie (1996), after examining the reasons why learners suffer a dip in attainment as they progress through school, reveal that the reasons behind this

dip in attainment are as much social as they are academic. They suggest that this dip can be attributed to "disenchantment with the nature of the teacher-student relationships and teaching strategies" (p. 294), stressing the importance of connections with staff in the new institution and familiarity with approaches to learning and teaching. This "disenchantment" can perhaps be considered alongside the Three Domains Tool as failure to identify and focus on the support children really need can lead to disengagement with school. Furthermore, Speering and Lennie suggest that what pupils see as relevant in their communities, useful in their lives and important to their sense of identity becomes more focused as they move through school. Yarosz and Barnett (2001) argue that if reading is not considered important within a learner's household, they may struggle to improve their skills in this area. They also contend that if a subject area has little or no value in their household and if there is no family or community connection to it and if that body of knowledge or skill is not valued then a learner's motivation to succeed in that area will dwindle, as they grow older. Furthermore, if a practice such as reading is not valued in the way it is positioned by schools, or if it is presented differently in a household or community, then children are unlikely to be motivated to succeed in this area. It is worth considering whether transition is a key point where an attainment gap really starts to present itself in a clearer way. Learners from backgrounds where subjects and skills are valued will maintain their motivation and strive for success, ultimately pulling away from their low SES peers. The importance of considering factors beyond attainment is also highlighted by the fact that gathering data on health and wellbeing is often considered of secondary importance to gathering attainment data (West et al., 2010). Furthermore, transition is a rite of passage that requires at least some adjustment from all students (Pratt & George, 2005) and there are considerable concerns related to familiarity with the school building, potential for bullying and maintenance of friendships in S1 (Zeedyk, 2003).

This returns us to the question of literacy and stresses the importance of reading and the ability to access the curriculum and engage with others. By extension, if a pupil struggles with reading or is a

reluctant reader at transition, we must take steps to counteract this. A poor transition process, which fails to account for these issues, can negatively impact attainment (West et al., 2010). A key factor in a successful transition is the understanding that school climate – the extent to which pupils feel safe, their social relationships and their connection to the establishment – is of at least equal importance to the pupil's capacity to continue to develop their attainment in the new setting. West et al., support this assertion by recognising the “persisting effects of transition variables on well-being and attainment” (p. 44). They acknowledge that transition features a wide range of challenges for children and that these variables – peer group issues, lack of continuity in pedagogy, and low self-esteem – can individually or collectively negatively impact on a child's attainment. Finally, positive relationships are an important factor in the transition experience (Pereira & Pooley, 2007; West et al., 2010) and can support students in feeling a greater sense of belonging and improved emotional wellbeing. Literacy education, and in this context, literacy interventions can be a useful means to develop positive pupil-teacher relationships when literacy is understood as a social practice.

3.8.1 Primary to secondary transitions: From synthetic phonics to reading for pleasure

Early reading ability is a key indicator of future success and the more quickly a child learns to read, the better a reader they are likely to become. Cunningham and Stanovich (1997) state that “First-grade reading ability was a strong predictor of all of the 11th-grade outcomes and remained so even when measures of cognitive ability were partialled out” (p. 934). This highlights the lasting impact of early reading attainment. Cunningham and Stanovich also use the concept of the Matthew effect to illustrate the negative outcomes encountered by children who struggle with early reading acquisition, commenting that “very early in the initial acquisition process, poor readers, who experience greater difficulty in breaking the spelling-to-sound code, begin to be exposed to much less text than their more skilled peers” (p. 934). The authors' reference to children being “exposed to much less text” helps to illustrate the paradox that can be created when schools try to support children who find reading

difficult. Experience of print and developing awareness of concepts of print is central to development of vocabulary and accumulation of knowledge (Stanovich, 1993). Therefore, when the rate of exposure to print is reduced, the learner's opportunities for progression become fewer. This shows the importance of regular reading opportunities to improve attainment. Furthermore, by extracting pupils from mainstream classes where they can work with their peers, we restrict a learner's access to funds of knowledge and their ability to increase their social capital among peers of greater SES (Moll, 1992). Class related patterns established through early reading attainment also persist throughout a learner's school career and are evident in their aspirations and attainment (Lareau 2015). Lareau discusses the way that different social groups navigate educational institutions and places importance on interventions for disadvantaged children, stating that "seemingly small events - such as getting a low grade in a key course or receiving timely, unsolicited help from a school counselor - can threaten a long-held goal, create opportunities, or solidify stages in a life path" (p. 2). This stresses the importance of tackling the poverty related attainment gap using appropriate, targeted interventions, as suggested by the Three Domains Tool (Ellis & Smith, 2017). However, we must also be aware of the potential danger of delegitimising a learner's social capital by removing their access to meaningful texts, conversations, practices and experiences that could enrich their learning.

Reading for Pleasure (RfP) is defined as reading that takes place, in the case of school-age children, outside of the demands of task-based classroom practice (Nell, 1988). Nell considers RfP to be a form of play, and to be pursued by participants for nothing more than its own ends. Furthermore, RfP has close ties to Bernstein's (2000) conceptualisation of competence pedagogy which seeks to empower children as learners and places value on their interests and backgrounds as opposed to dictating which domains and practices are valuable as per the curriculum (Hempel-Jorgensen et al, 2018).

Clark and Rumbold (2006) argue that Reading for Pleasure (RfP) is essential for granting access to social, economic, and civic life, and for developing oneself as a person. They further stress its

importance by referring to the UK Government's Department of Culture, Media and Sport (2003) who stated that "people cannot be active or informed citizens unless they can read. Reading is a prerequisite for almost all cultural and social activities" (p. 5). Therefore, it is reasonable to conclude that a person who is unable to engage in RfP will find it difficult to develop their knowledge and understanding of the world around them as well as being unable to contribute to important aspects of our society and lead a fulfilling life.

RfP can be positioned alongside regular teaching of reading in schools in terms of its importance. RfP is, by its nature, participant-led, meaning that texts are chosen, reading can take place anywhere, for any duration of time and there is no academic task associated with the reading material. It is considered an act and a purpose in and of itself. However, this approach can differ from learners' experiences of reading in the classroom. Contrastingly, the English National Curriculum (Department for Education 2013) regards reading as a technical proficiency where progress and performance is assessed through formal testing. This means that in early primary school, reading can be positioned as performative, focusing on basic skills such as phonics. In upper primary and early secondary texts are most often chosen by the teacher, with little attention paid to their interest level. Also, reading often takes place alongside tasks or homework, with set amounts required to be read in a set timeframe. This can lead to learners viewing reading in a negative light. Importantly, if children are "struggling" or "reluctant" readers, they may also experience repeated failure thus reducing the motivation to persevere and reducing the chances of reading being viewed as something to enjoy. If the way in which reading is taught in schools makes some children view reading in a negative light, then it can be argued that this pedagogy prevents pupils from being the informed citizens capable of taking part in all cultural and social activities described in the previous paragraph. This outcome can be avoided by ensuring that RfP sits alongside regular teaching of reading in its importance in classrooms. RfP can also be successful

if parents, teachers, and policy makers actively promote it and promote it as an activity that has value and merit (Clark & Rumbold, 2006).

The challenge with RfP initiatives is that they are often seen as an additional or extra part of the curriculum as opposed to being a central pillar of reading instruction. Furthermore, it can be difficult to produce a quantitative measure of their impact.

3.8.2 Literacy interventions at transition points: Supporting and sustaining reading

The purpose of reading interventions is to support children to become more proficient readers, attending to gaps in key areas such as phonics, fluency, phonemic awareness, development of vocabulary, and helping children to reach age and stage appropriate levels (Gorard et al., 2017). However, a reading intervention should also support children to become readers outside of the classroom, and to remain readers long after they have left school, as reading is essential for granting access to social, economic, and civic life, and for developing oneself as a person (Clark & Rumbold, 2006).

The transition from primary to secondary school has been identified as a key moment of risk for learners who are struggling readers. Clarke et al., (2017) states that there is a lack of research into what works to support readers in the context of transition, despite wide acknowledgement of the importance of this stage of the learner journey. Clarke et al., also state that while phonics and language comprehension are agreed to be important aspects of learning to read, there is little research on interventions to support their development accessed by children at transition. Furthermore, as the demands of secondary school reading quickly surpass what was required at primary (Bark & Brooks, 2016), not necessarily in difficulty, but in the volume and range of texts children are asked to access and the varying literacy practices across subjects. Bark and Brooks (2016) also contend that the structure of secondary schools is prohibitive when it comes to teachers having an overview of children's needs and

their most appropriate progression pathway and pupils accessing interventions often did so at the cost of a subject they enjoyed such as music, art or drama.

The approach taken by schools to improve proficiency in reading can vary between interventions. Siddiqui et al., (2016) describe the mechanics of *Accelerated Reader*, a web-based intervention used in Scotland to support learners at transition. It involves an initial standardised baseline assessment, after which teachers track children's reading behaviour and support them to choose motivational texts that gradually increase in difficulty. Pupils must read their texts independently, and progress is measured by a short, comprehension-focused quiz on completion. Kehne et al., (2018), argue that if an intervention is deficit-based – focusing on what children cannot do – then it misses an opportunity to capitalise on the literacy resources and practices they bring with them from their families and communities. In addition, Ellis and Rowe (2020) argue that for an intervention to succeed it must not only attend to the academic needs of the children it supports but also to their social and emotional needs and desires. The writers position the importance of being literate as a necessity for children to access not only valued social and economic domains in society, but also to have better outcomes related to health and self-fulfilment. However, they also emphasise the importance of these interventions being "socially, emotionally, and culturally inclusive" (Ellis & Rowe, 2020, p. 419).

Finally, in terms of evidence of success, Siddiqui et al. (2016) argue that the approach to evaluating whether an intervention is successful is not robust. They point out that for some interventions, the control groups can make more progress than the target group. Additionally, while Accelerated Reader claims to support participants becoming lifelong readers, Siddiqui et al. suggest that a longer-term study is required to assess this. This raises the question of whether programmes such as Accelerated Reader create enough interest in reading among participants to ensure that they continue to read after the programme, and school, ends.

3.9 Chapter Summary

The preceding literature review has demonstrated the need for teachers to be aware of the impact of the interventions they offer on children's motivation to read and their attainment in reading. This chapter also cites literature that positions literacy as a social practice and technical skill. It recognises the entanglement that exists between identity, poverty and inequalities, the way that literacy is bound to these issues and one way this can be addressed. Finally, this chapter also presented literature to support the importance of working at transition and demonstrates the need to identify what works in terms of supporting readers at transition and the need to examine our practices at this important stage in a child's school career.

Chapter Four: Research Methodology and Research Methods

4.0 Chapter Overview

As this research investigated three reading interventions, the chapter initially provides an overview of what each reading programme involved, before outlining the methods used to answer the following research question: What were the experiences of struggling and reluctant readers at transition of three interventions, particularly in relation to the dimensions of the three-domains model, namely: a) Cognitive knowledge and skills, b) identity and agency, and c) social and cultural capital.

The chapter begins by introducing the research standpoint and justifying the constructivist, ontological stance adopted in the project. It then describes the features of each reading intervention programme, followed by a discussion around the methodology adopted in this research. The chapter then goes on to consider how concerns such as recruitment and sampling were attended to. This is followed by a discussion around ethics, positionality, informed consent and power imbalances, and the consideration given to possible impact on participants' school experience. The chapter then focuses on processes for data analysis. Finally, the chapter closes by reflecting on possible limitations of the methodological approach taken as well as the impact of covid. It considers gaps that may exist because of the use of the York Assessment of Reading Comprehension (YARC) and semi-structured interviews as data collection tools and discusses the importance of crystallisation, rather than triangulation, as a more effective lens for ensuring trustworthiness, credibility and integrity of the data.

4.1 Research Standpoint

This study adopts a constructivist approach that draws on qualitative and quantitative data to understand participants' thoughts and experiences of the reading interventions employed at the point of primary to secondary transition. A constructivist approach enables researchers to examine phenomena through the lens of participants' lived experiences. Guba and Lincoln (1989) support this

idea, recognising that “realities are social constructions of the mind, and that there exist as many such constructions as there are individuals (although clearly many constructions will be shared)” (p. 43). Constructivism emphasises the active role played by participants in constructing knowledge through their experiences and social interactions. Through their responses to interview questions, participants draw on their prior knowledge of the interventions and build upon real-life contexts to form their ideas and opinions. Taber (2011) and Sawyer (2014) argue that drawing from this real-life context leads to deeper engagement and understanding. Constructivism also aligns with a mixed methods approach; the mixing of datasets as the best way to answer research questions that cannot be answered by examining quantitative or qualitative data alone (Creswell & Creswell, 2005; Greene, et al., 1989). Stake (1994) argues that “to optimize understanding of the case” (p. 236) is the central aim of case study research. Furthermore Stake (1995) makes clear that case studies should be viewed and understood from multiple viewpoints and understandings, arguing that “no aspects of knowledge are purely of the external world, devoid of human construction” (p. 100). In this study this alignment can be seen in the way that children’s interview responses are mixed with a variety of datasets including standardised assessment data, SIMD data, and teacher professional judgement data to determine the impact of the intervention on their cognitive knowledge and skills, personal and social identity, and social and cultural capital; the pillars of the Three Domains Tool (Ellis & Smith, 2017) discussed in chapter two and chapter three.

Ontology seeks to understand the reality of which entities exist, how those entities can be grouped together, and how they are interconnected (Bryman, 2012). Lincoln and Guba (2013) argue that ontology is concerned with the question of “What is there that can be known?” (p. 39). In this study, a constructivist ontological stance has been adopted in recognition that each participant will understand and respond to the interventions they access through their own individual experiences. A constructivist ontological stance has also been selected as I recognise that each participant may experience a different reality when considering their identity as a reader, what reading means to them, and how they view the

interventions they have participated in. To embed a constructivist approach, it is necessary for meaning to be grounded in the experiences of both the researcher and the participants and for the researcher to be aware of their own role in the process and the impact it may have (Mills et al, 2006).

4.2 Intervention Design, Rationale and Implementation

A summary of the interventions featured in this study can be found below. A more detailed description of the interventions featured in this study was presented in chapter 1.4.

Table 2: Summary of Interventions

Intervention	Brief Description
Reading Ambassadors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus on comprehension • Free choice of text • Adhered to 'The Rights of the Reader' (Pennac, 2010) • Participants read in their own time • Book talk focused on Three Sharings (Chambers, 1993) • English library period used once per week for discussion around texts
Read, Write Inc	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus on fluency and accuracy • Phonics-based intervention • Participants worked through RWI: Fresh Start Units • Separate class formed during English • 3 periods of RWI: Fresh Start • 1 library period per week for personal reading
The After School Reading Club	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learner-led focus on comprehension and fluency • Free choice of text • Adhered to 'The Rights of the Reader' (Pennac, 2010) • Participants read in their own time • Book talk focused on Three Sharings (Chambers, 1993) • Sessions once per week after school (voluntary) • Nurture aspect meant that refreshments were provided

This thesis studied the experiences of struggling and reluctant readers at transition who participated in three reading interventions, particularly in relation to the dimensions of the three-domains model, namely: a) cognitive knowledge and skills, b) identity and agency, and c) social and cultural capital. Both Reading Ambassadors and the After School Reading Club are interventions

developed and implemented in collaboration with colleagues from across the cluster. The interventions emerged from research into reading as social practice and aimed to support children to improve as readers by developing their interest in reading for pleasure and increasing the likelihood of reading beyond school.

4.2.1 The role of the teacher-researcher

Hammersley (1993) accredits the emergence of the role of the teacher-researcher to a move "within the community of curriculum developers and evaluators away from a bureaucratic model in which new curricula were developed centrally by experts, adopted by local authorities, schools and teachers, and assessed by specialised evaluators using quantitative measurement of outcomes" (p. 426). Hammersley states that this "bureaucratic model" was rejected in favour of an approach that embraced qualitative methods that were more effective in attending to "local circumstances, and presented findings in terms that were accessible and useful to teachers, parents and others" (p. 427). This relates to the context and tensions within this study that arise from the dominance of quantitative data and whether allowing this dominance serves to diminish participants' voices present in the qualitative data. Hammersley also discusses the criticisms of conventional education research, stating that it is "largely irrelevant to the practical concerns of teachers" (p. 429). As a teacher-researcher it was important that the impact of the project was felt by real people in real circumstances which supports the decision to crystallise rather than triangulate the data. I wanted teachers to be able to see their own practice and experiences in the stories children told and, perhaps more importantly, I wanted the accounts of the interventions to be reflective of the views and experiences of the children who accessed them.

The interventions are described in detail in the sections below, accompanied by a table summarising the background of the participants and the outcome of their involvement.

4.2.2 Reading Ambassadors

Table 3: Summary of participant involvement in Reading Ambassadors

Pseudonym	Age at beginning of intervention	Intervention accessed	Summary of Background
Andrew	11y 5m	Reading Ambassadors	Considered a reluctant reader. Enjoys sci-fi texts and reads with dad. Vocal about the in-class reading always being attached to a task.
Bree	11y 2m	Reading Ambassadors	Considered a reluctant reader. Reads non-traditional texts such as 'one-shots' at home. Enjoys horror and shares these texts with parents.

The *Reading Ambassadors* programme ran throughout the school year from September until the end of May. The programme had been running in various forms for several years, with the support of the school librarian and English Department staff as a means of encouraging reading for pleasure in new first year pupils and providing opportunities to work with young people for children in sixth year. Participants were identified for this intervention through analysis of Primary 7 transition data including SIMD data and teacher professional judgement. As the intervention was funded by the pupil equity fund, children in SIMD 1 and 2 were prioritised. Children who were not in this category but who had been identified as needing support were also considered. As the intervention focused on developing comprehension children who could read, but were reluctant to do so, formed the target group. Participants were extracted from their English class during the first-year library period. At the beginning of the intervention, they were asked to choose books they were interested in reading from the Waterstone's website. These books were then purchased using the Pupil Equity Fund and it was made clear to children that the books were theirs to keep. In the year that was the focus of this study, the conditions created by the Covid-19 pandemic provided the opportunity for participants to engage in weekly book-talk sessions with PGDE students from the University of Strathclyde.

Reading Ambassadors was supported by the assessment that cross-age peer tuition benefits both the older and younger students who take part (Topping et al., 2012). This intervention draws from the theory discussed in chapter three behind Reading for Pleasure, learner identity and frames reading as social practice rather than cognitive function. Initially, senior students were given training broadly based on Daniel Pennac's 'The Rights of the Reader' (2010) (appendix three). Along with Aiden Chambers' 'Three Sharings' (1993) this helped to provide senior students and children participating in the intervention with a framework for discussion focusing on characteristics of the texts students say they enjoy, questions that arise from their reading and patterns they spot within and beyond the text. The most impactful cross-age peer tuition programmes feature clear guidelines and scaffolding for all participants (Topping et al., 2012), therefore the training of senior students as *Reading Ambassadors*, with observation of implementation fidelity observed by staff, had the potential to provide pupils with the necessary tools to improve as readers. In line with Pennac (2010), this intervention relied heavily on pupils being aware of and being able to choose texts that are of high interest, with the option to change their text at any point if necessary. The intervention was driven by the control and ownership participants have over the process. This approach differed from their reading experience in class which was heavily teacher-led and left little room for children's input regarding what was read. This intervention demonstrated that there is room for teacher-led experiences, but also that there should be room for student-led experiences, and that these need to be negotiated in the curriculum to support learning that is more engaging and contextually relevant.

The central idea behind both the *After School Reading Club* and *Reading Ambassadors* is to use Reading for Pleasure to support children who may have the necessary cognitive knowledge and skills but require intervention to develop their identity and agency, and social and cultural capital. As stated by Clark and Rumbold (2006), reading for pleasure can have a greater impact on a learner's outcomes than their family's SES status (Clark & Rumbold, 2006). This is significant as it demonstrates the impact that a

successful reading for pleasure intervention can have for reluctant readers. There is also a connection to capital as the opportunity to access culturally relevant texts gives students capital which can then be enacted to improve outcomes. Furthermore, Clark and Rumbold state that “children who read very little do not have the benefits that come with reading (see below), and studies show that when struggling readers are not motivated to read, their opportunities to learn decrease significantly (e.g. Baker, Dreher and Guthrie, 2000). This can lead to strong negative feelings about reading and create a vicious circle in which poor readers remain poor readers (Juel, 1988)” (p. 7). Therefore, opportunities to engage in reading for pleasure are vital in ensuring that children can seize opportunities to learn when they are presented to them. They are also vital in ensuring that learners develop as readers and do not become trapped in their position as poor readers.

4.2.3 Read Write Inc: Fresh Start

Table 4: Summary of participant involvement in Read Write Inc: Fresh Start

Pseudonym	Age at beginning of intervention	Intervention accessed	Summary of Background
Cara	12y 11m	Read Write Inc: Fresh Start	Cara had delayed entry into P1. Considered a struggling reader. Has little support at home. Received support in primary for reading and has a low view of herself as a reader.
Daniel	11y 8m	Read Write Inc: Fresh Start	Considered a struggling reader. Identified as dyslexic in primary. Views reading as a means to an end and equates improved reading with improved performance in school.

Read, Write Inc: Fresh Start was an intervention purchased by the local authority to support secondary school pupils with literacy difficulties. Phonological awareness forms an important part of reading instruction and a learner’s ability to be a successful reader (Hulme et al., 2005). Fluency in reading, a sign of proficiency in phonics, is a defining characteristic of good readers and conversely, a

lack of fluency is a common thread for poorer readers (Hudson et al., 2005). This stresses the importance of proficiency in phonics if a learner is to become a successful reader.

The intervention is reflective of the autonomous view of reading described in chapter 3.2. Transition data, in the form of primary seven teacher judgement of CfE literacy levels and standardised assessment scores, were analysed to determine the pupils who would benefit from this intervention. Children who participated in this intervention did so instead of attending their regular English class. The intervention ran from September until May of first year. The class consisted of nine children who worked with a secondary English teacher who attended a three-day training course in preparation to deliver the intervention. Children were assessed to determine the appropriate starting point on the programme and then worked their way through progressive units. Their lessons involved recital of sounds and booklet work using passages that contained the sounds they had worked on in that unit, reinforcing their new learning and providing an opportunity to use it in context.

4.2.4 The After School Reading Club

Table 5: Summary of participant involvement in the After School Reading Club

Pseudonym	Age at beginning of intervention	Intervention accessed	Summary of Background
Erin	11y 11m	After School Reading Club	Considered a struggling reader. Lacks confidence in reading aloud. Comprehension of texts means that she doesn't always contribute to discussions.
Fern	11y 4m	After School Reading Club	Considered a struggling reader. Identified as dyslexic in Primary. Enjoys discussing books and is enthusiastic about texts she enjoys.

The *After School Reading Club* was an intervention developed to provide children with an improved literacy environment and the opportunity to develop as readers in a low-stakes environment.

The intervention shared many features of the *Reading Ambassadors* intervention, but the key difference was that attendance at the *After School Reading Club* was voluntary. The rationale behind this intervention was that children who were either “struggling” or “reluctant” readers - or both - could attend and read texts that they enjoyed in a more relaxed environment. Rie et al., (2017) suggests that a learner’s home environment can impact their literacy skills. When we consider this alongside research showing that learners who involve themselves in extra-curricular activities have improved attitudes to their studies, improved social circles, and are more likely to have positive outcomes (Hanewald, 2013) we can see that an after-school intervention can be beneficial.

This intervention took place once per week at the end of the school day. The target group was children in first year in SIMD 1 and 2 but all children from the year group were welcome to join. In a similar way to *Reading Ambassadors*, the pupil equity fund was used to purchase texts that children identified they would like to read. The social, nurturing aspect of the group was developed through buying pizzas and juice each week, helping attendees to associate reading with a positive social situation rather than a task in class. Finally, older pupils who are proficient readers attend to support the group. For the target group, this provided access to funds of knowledge and social capital they would otherwise be unaware of or rarely meet. They also learned to model their own reading habits and practices on readers that are more successful.

Some children who came along enjoyed reading aloud with volunteer teachers or older children who supported the sessions, others enjoyed reading quietly, and all engaged in discussions about the books they selected. Like *Reading Ambassadors*, this intervention also abided by the 'Rights of the Reader' set out by Pennac (2010), where children not only had choice over their reading material but could also swap their text for another book at any point, read as much of their text as they wanted and read where and when suited them

4.3 Case Study Methodology

The argument for the alignment between case studies and mixed methods research is made by Guetterman and Fetters (2018) who state that “Investigators are increasingly combining case studies and mixed methods, which, if conducted systematically and thoughtfully, can yield a more complete understanding” (p. 901) of their areas of research. Furthermore, Yin (2014) suggests that mixed methods case study can “enable you to address broader or more complicated research questions than case studies alone” (Yin, 2014, p. 67). Baxter and Jack (2008) also express their support for the use of case studies in qualitative research by stating that;

qualitative case study is an approach to research that facilitates exploration of a phenomenon within its context using a variety of data sources. This ensures that the issue is not explored through one lens, but rather a variety of lenses, which allows for multiple facets of the phenomenon to be revealed and understood (p. 544).

Additionally, Yin (2003) considers case studies through a constructivist lens, foregrounding truth as that seen through the eyes of the subject of the study and therefore being open to multiple truths emerging from different sources regarding the same subject. This aligns with the approach taken in this study as each participant responded differently in their interviews, giving their thoughts and their feelings about the interventions and the impact they had on them. Yin (2003) also explains that, as in this thesis, a multiple case study facilitates the exploration of differences within and between cases, allowing the researcher to replicate findings across cases and to draw comparisons.

Harrison et al., (2017) state that;

The continued use of case study to understand the complexities of institutions, practices, processes, and relations in politics, has demonstrated the utility of case study

for researching complex issues, and testing causal mechanisms that can be applied across varied disciplines (p. 4).

This further supports the choice of a case study approach for this project as each participant brings their own set of complex experiences - their social and cultural capital - to bear on how they interact with the interventions, the interviews and the standardised assessment process.

Therefore, a case study approach within a mixed methods research design was adopted for this study as the aim of the study was to gain a more complete understanding of participants' experiences of reading interventions through the lens of the Three Domains Tool and Bourdieu's theory of capital, specifically their cognitive knowledge and skills, identity and agency, and cultural and social capital. To achieve this, it was necessary to bring together qualitative data in the form of children's interview responses along with quantitative data yielded by their standardised assessment performance.

Mixed methods research can be defined as a methodology that involves gathering, integrating, analysing, or combining qualitative and quantitative data to create a new and distinct set of data (Greene et al., 1989; Cresswell & Cresswell, 2005). In this study, this approach allowed the researcher to compare data from qualitative interviews, explain the results from standardised assessments and to then generate and engage in discussion to explore the impact the interventions had on participants' cognitive knowledge and skills, identity and agency, and cultural and social capital. Additionally, as stated by Hodgkin (2008) "Quantitative and qualitative methods can be used together to give a more powerful voice" (p. 299). In this study the data sets mix and come together in the case studies. For example, a complete understanding of children's experiences of *Read Write Inc: Fresh Start* can only be gained by examining the impact on their cognitive knowledge and skills – as understood through analysis of quantitative data generated through standardised assessments – and the impact on their identity and agency, and cultural and social capital, as understood through qualitative data generated in participant

interviews. As will be discussed later in this chapter, the increasing significance of the qualitative data as a means of crystallising participants' constructions of their experiences of the intervention became evident as the project proceeded.

A single site mixed methods case study approach was used to understand six children's experiences of being a) "struggling" and "reluctant" readers; b) involved in one of three reading intervention programmes; c) at the point of transition from primary to secondary. The constructivist ontological stance taken in this study means that the experiences of each child are regarded as an individual case. Appleton (2002) makes the case for alignment between case study and a constructivist ontological stance stating that;

The case study strategy also fits in well with the requirements of a constructivist ontology that emphasises the holistic nature of realities and the importance of studying phenomena in their natural uncontrolled contexts. It is also useful for studying multiple realities, because many issues can be examined in-depth within a particular context (p. 89).

The case study approach involved the collection of quantitative and qualitative datasets and therefore supported a detailed, in-depth understanding of participants' experiences of the interventions they accessed.

In contrast to positivist studies which seek to present universal truths, constructivist ontologies highlight the need to recognise the meanings that participants ascribe to their own realities (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011). Accordingly, in constructivist research, exploration of participants' interpretations of "real world" experiences in their natural context is key and is informed by participants' own identities and experiences (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011). Constructivism, as the epistemological and ontological grounding of this study, is therefore particularly suited to this study, as the focus of this research is on the

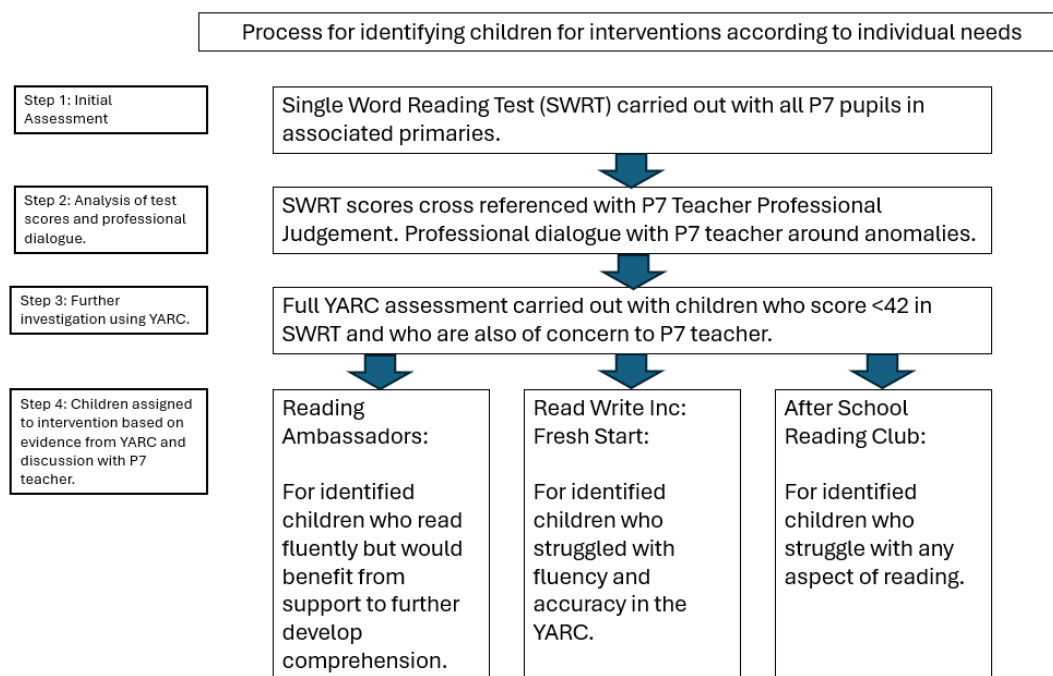
subjective nature of learners' experiences of interventions, including recognition of how these have been informed by participants' identities as readers, and what reading means to them.

4.4 Sampling and Recruitment

To carry out this research, I sought approval from my Head Teacher and the Local Authority, granted in January 2020 (appendix two). I asked all pupils involved in each of the interventions to volunteer to take part in the project. I received six responses, and I then sought consent from the participants and their parents. I issued a letter outlining the project's aims, what it would involve and noted the right of participants and their parents or carers to withdraw from it at any time.

Participants had already been subject to exclusion criteria for participating in the research before the interventions began. At school level, a decision was made to prioritise interventions for children residing in SIMD 1 or 2 of the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation within the school's catchment area. Furthermore, children selected for the intervention were among a group of learners who had been judged by their Primary 7 teacher to not yet have achieved 2nd level in literacy and were also judged to be “struggling” or “reluctant” readers. These decisions were made using datasets provided by the local authority and the associated primary schools. The process for assigning children to interventions is illustrated by the figure below.

Figure 2: Process for identifying children for interventions based on individual needs



Recruitment began in August, within the first few weeks of the participants' first year of secondary school. Each intervention was asked as a group who would like to take part and the six children who responded were included in the study. Parental permission was sought and granted after they had expressed their interest.

The participants ($n=6$) included two boys aged 12 and 11, one girl aged 12 and three girls aged 11 who engaged in reading interventions after transition from Primary to Secondary school. *Reading Ambassadors* pupils engaged in dialogue around their texts for one fifty-minute period per week during English. *Read Write Inc: Fresh Start* participants took part in the intervention three times per week in fifty-minute periods in place of mainstream English classes and were situated with the same class group for an additional library period. Children who attended the *After School Reading Club* did so once per week for one hour where they enjoyed pizza and juice in the school library. All participants and their parents provided consent to take part in the study. Each intervention was supported by a fully qualified secondary English teacher.

4.5 Data Collection

To create an approach that allows multiple participant perspectives to be included in the research (Winston, 2006) I used standardised assessments to generate quantitative data and semi-structured interviews to gather qualitative data. This links with the constructivist approach outlined earlier in this chapter and gives voice to children's ideas, opinions, and lived experiences. This allowed for multiple participant perspectives.

Dataset 1 consisted of:

- Standardised Assessments

Dataset 2 consisted of:

- Semi- structured interview responses

These datasets were gathered and then mixed to address the following research question; 'What were the experiences of struggling and reluctant readers at transition of three interventions, particularly in relation to the dimensions of the three-domains model, namely: a) Cognitive knowledge and skills, b) identity and agency, and c) social and cultural capital.' Standardised assessment data was typically collected at the beginning of each intervention in August of first year and again in May at the end of first year. This data was gathered using the York Assessment of Reading Comprehension (YARC) which was the standardised assessment used across the local authority. A discussion around the suitability and use of YARC can be found in section 4.8.3. For participants engaging with *Read Write Inc: Fresh Start* and the *After School Reading Club* semi-structured interviews were carried out at the end of the intervention. For participants who engaged with *Reading Ambassadors* a pre-intervention interview was carried out in August of first year and an exit interview was carried out in May of first year.

Table 6. Research questions with corresponding dataset, data collection tools and relation to research questions

Pupil experience of intervention in relation to ...	Dataset used to answer question	Data Collection Tools	Relation to research questions
<i>Cognitive Knowledge and Skills</i>	Dataset 1	Standardised Assessments	Indicates progress in reading in terms of attainment
<i>Identity and Agency</i>	Dataset 2	1 to 1 semi-structured interviews	Interview questions address how children feel about themselves as readers
<i>Social and Cultural Capital</i>	Dataset 2	1 to 1 semi structured interviews	Interview questions address the extent to which children feel their interests are reflected in reading activities

4.5.1 Dataset One - Standardised Assessments

For this study I opted to use standardised assessments in the form of the York Assessment of Reading Comprehension (YARC). The YARC assesses four strands of reading; single word reading; fluency; reading rate; and comprehension. Staff in the local authority in which the study occurred were familiar with this assessment and its components, and in my professional role I had several years of experience of using it.

I collected quantitative data on attainment in reading on P7 pupils from our cluster in the form of teacher judgement of CfE levels. This was combined with the data from the single word reading test (SWRT) I administered in the summer term of P7. Where an anomaly existed between the SWRT and teacher judgement of attainment in reading I investigated further by using the YARC (York Assessment of Reading Comprehension) standardised assessment. The YARC provided both a standardised score and a reading age for reading rate, reading fluency, single word reading, reading accuracy and comprehension. I then analysed the results of the YARC test to identify which, if any, aspects of reading the learner struggled with. I defined struggling readers as those with a deficit of two or more years when reading age was compared to chronological age or a mark below 85 on their standardised score. In the context of our cluster, teachers agreed that a deficit of two or more years indicated that a child was

working almost an entire level behind their peers, which could be reasonably be deemed a significant enough gap to have an impact on their ability to access the curriculum at the appropriate level.

4.5.2 Dataset Two - Semi-structured interviews

In this study I engaged in semi-structured interviews with participants before they embarked on their intervention and at the exit point at the end of the year (appendix four). This approach was taken as the flexibility it offered made the experience less daunting for the children involved. Also, my experience as a teacher, where I engage with young people regularly, ensured that I would be well placed to aid participants in overcoming any awkwardness within the interview process. The interviews were recorded and were carried out in a classroom in the school or in my office in the school to ensure privacy. Transcripts made after the interviews were de-identified as described earlier. The interview questions were designed to encourage participants to consider themselves as readers and to consider why they held those views. They also aimed to help participants identify why it was important to change those views and what steps they could take to do so. Finally, the interviews were designed to encourage participants to value their own practices as readers. The initial interview sought to establish the reading practices of the participants and how they viewed themselves as readers. The exit interview at the end of the intervention with participants was intended to establish any shifts in mind-set regarding learner identity and to ascertain if learners valued the interventions they accessed. Both interviews can be viewed in appendix four.

Menter et al (2011) state that interviews may be structured, semi-structured or unstructured. Furthermore, questions can be changed to suit the context, and participants can seek clarification if they do not understand the question. However, there are also some disadvantages to interviews. They are time-consuming and can be challenging to conduct due to the social dynamics between the interviewer and interviewee. The relationship between interviewer and interviewee can mean that sensitive issues

can be difficult to discuss. The reliance on verbal interaction may be made more difficult because they may feel intimidated having these discussions with a teacher. Finally, it is possible that interviewers could influence interviewees through verbal and non-verbal means (Menter et al., 2011). For this thesis, data was gathered from semi-structured interviews carried out on a 1 to 1 basis with participants.

Ruslin et al. (2022), state that using semi-structured interviews “allows researchers to acquire in-depth information and evidence from interviewees while seriously considering the focus of the study” (p. 22). Advantages include the flexibility to ask relevant questions based on observations matched to specific circumstances; conversational tone can make it easier for participants to discuss their thoughts. Furthermore, Sewell (2008) argues that the point or purpose of a semi-structured interview is to uncover the lived experiences of the interviewee from their perspective. Kvale (1996) stresses that a qualitative interview is based on a conversation in which a researcher asks questions and listens to interviewees at the same time, while respondents (interviewees) answer questions. From this perspective, Kvale implicitly puts a researcher and an interviewee in an equal position. Furthermore, Flick (2002), states that the open nature of the semi-structured interview means that the process can yield deeper, more meaningful contributions than other forms of engagement such as structured interviews or questionnaires.

Menter et al. (2011) advocates the interviewer clarifying the interview purpose prior to beginning. The interviewer should also demonstrate how the questions are relevant to the research aims. In addition, Lichtman (2006) advocates for the interview taking place in a location that makes the participant feel comfortable.

4.6 Ethics and Positionality

The well-being of children, parents/ carers, and colleagues is an important priority for all educational researchers (Menter et al., 2011). As per the General Teaching Council for Scotland’s (GTCS)

Code of Professionalism and Conduct (2012) teachers have a duty to ensure the wellbeing of children and young people as well as to safeguard the reputation of teachers and the public's trust in the teaching profession. This research was granted ethical approval via the University of Strathclyde's Ethics Committee and by the Local Authority in which it takes place. Ethical issues and considerations, their relevance, and how they were addressed are discussed in the section that follows.

4.6.1 Gaining Informed Consent

The subject of informed consent is particularly important for educational research as it invariably involves children as participants in the research. Ethical considerations include whether children understand their right to withdraw, whether they genuinely wish to participate or are being encouraged by an adult in a position of power, and whether their views are truly represented in the research (Bourke & Loveridge, 2013). As suggested by Menter et al. (2011) I produced a Participant Information Sheet (PIS); a clear summary on one side of A4 paper clarifying the project's aims to be distributed to participants. I also described the methods I would use to gather data. I spoke to parents of participants on the telephone and discussed the aims of the project as a means of supporting the PIS I sent home with the child. I spoke to participants' parents on the telephone and discussed the project's aims to support the PIS I sent home with the child (appendix one). Participants were given the right to refuse permission to participate and reminded of their right to withdraw from the project at any time (Silverman, 2013). All participants gave their consent to participate in the study and no parent wished to withdraw their child from the research.

4.6.2 Addressing Power Imbalances

Power imbalances between interviewer and interviewee can result in participants feeling pressured into providing the answers they feel a researcher wants to hear during interviews. Ruslin et al., (2022) warn that in a more formal interview setting, "the power of the questioner is much greater than that of the interviewee" (p. 23). In the school setting in which this study took place, this power

could have been present in the relationship I had with participants but also in the way that questions were asked, and even in the fact that the interviews were carried out on a one-to-one basis in my office. Mills et al., (2006) explain that a constructivist approach supports both the researcher and participant to address any power imbalances that exist in the researcher's relationships with participants because of the researcher's position as a teacher in their school. While the fact that I was a teacher in the school attended by participants makes it impossible to fully address any power imbalances, by adopting a "researcher" position, in which I made clear to children that I was seeking to learn from them as a doctoral student myself, I was able to create space to reposition the extent to which those power imbalances were at play. Therefore, a constructivist epistemological perspective was selected as it was advantageous to the study whether participants, including the researcher, were able to construct knowledge through their experiences to develop their understandings of self and other.

4.6.3 Anonymity and Confidentiality

Bos and Bos (2020) state that "confidentiality entails an obligation on the part of the researcher to ensure that any use of information obtained from or shared by human subjects respects the dignity and autonomy of the participant and does not violate the interests of individuals or communities" (p. 153). Participants' confidentiality and anonymity has been maintained throughout this thesis. The participants' interviews were all de-identified and any notes from observations were all given a corresponding code. Also, all participants were informed about the research goals and made aware of their right to withdraw from the research at any point.

4.6.4 Impact on participants' school experience

I was aware that children who participated in *Reading Ambassadors* and *Read Write Inc: Fresh Start*, interventions that took place during the school day would potentially miss out on time in their English class and therefore be at a disadvantage with other children in the year group. Souto-Manning and Epley (2024) state that "access to inequitable programs can further inequity, foster harm, and inflict

trauma” (p. 158). To ensure this did not happen I liaised with colleagues to ensure that the intervention took place during the weekly private reading period. This ensured that children were still engaged in a reading for pleasure activity but, crucially, did not miss any class time that could have hindered their progress. Additionally, while children who participated in *Read Write Inc: Fresh Start* did so in place of English, I ensured that their parents were fully aware of this move, consented to it, and made sure the children retained their private reading period to encourage them to engage in reading for pleasure.

4.6.5 Positionality and Reflexivity

To properly carry out research, the researcher must be aware of their own role in the process. Habitus provides us with a framework that can explain the processes of social phenomena we are investigating and our own approach to them (Lareau, 2015). It is a way for a person to define themselves based on their lived experiences and situations that have influenced them and provides a framework that can be used to explain the processes of social phenomena we are investigating. Our dispositions, opinions and biases are a result of our lived, internalised experiences and are used to justify and explain the positions our practice adopts.

This study occurred within the school where I worked Principal Teacher in charge of the interventions they accessed. This meant I was an active part of the process and, therefore, in this study, the researcher's role was emic (Markee, 2013). Furthermore, through my participation in semi-structured interviews with participants and my employment as Principal Teacher of Literacy and Transition, I was an instrument of data collection (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011). My own reflexivity as a teacher researcher aligns with constructivism because my own interpretations of the data as an "insider" to the school enabled me to give richer and thicker insights than those that would have been possible had I been engaged in this study as an external researcher. This aligns with the constructivist paradigm described in section 4.1 of this chapter.

It is also important to consider the insider-outsider stance present in this study. The interpersonal relationship I had with children was different as I worked with this group through their transition from Primary school. My remit also had a Pupil Support element to it which again impacted the insider-outsider stance. I was aware of personal information related to each participant and their families. Positionality dictates that the way I interpreted the interactions I had with participants and the data I analysed from interviews was impacted by my own experiences (Bukamal, 2023). This also relates to Hilgers and Mangez' (2015) description of Bourdieu's concept of field, described in chapter two of this thesis, where part of the conditions of the field that features in this study was my position as a teacher in the school the participants attended.

As suggested by Purcell-Gates (1993) adopting a participant observer stance enables the researcher to "become members of the culture (homes) in ways which allow them to observe the literacy events as they work alongside the pupil participants and as a researcher and as a reflective practitioner" (p. 671). When this study was conducted, the researcher was a member of that culture and present within the context. Although this research takes place in the school and not the home, the participant observer is present in interviews, dealing with the transition process and in selecting pupils for interventions. Moreover, by participating alongside the young people, and, when appropriate during the interviews, relating my own experiences as a reader, pupil, and teacher, they can explore their identity as readers, and, through the sharing of lived experiences, co-construct their identities (Taylor, 1996; Winston, 1998). This aligns with Neelands' (2006) recommendation on reflective practitioner research as "self-orientation towards understanding and improving one's own practice" (p. 16). Therefore, the resulting data from interviews and standardised assessments is used to inform thinking for future interventions. To embed reflexivity within this study I maintained a reflexive journal where I recorded thoughts about my experiences with participants during interviews and observations of their behaviour in the intervention.

A central part of this research involves semi-structured interviews with participants as a data-gathering tool. Reflexivity helps the researcher to be mindful of their own part in the process and to navigate the danger that the complex life experiences of the interviewer and interviewee are processed into sound bytes and distilled for the purposes of the research. Reflexivity also encourages a critical understanding of the experiences and worldview of both the researcher and the researched. By navigating subjectivity and reflexivity we can be successful in gaining new understanding of the phenomena we are investigating.

The Scottish context for this research, reflexivity and being a reflective practitioner are important when considered alongside the research questions; What were the experiences of struggling and reluctant readers at transition of three interventions, particularly in relation to the dimensions of the three-domains model, namely; cognitive knowledge and skills; identity and agency; and social and cultural capital. The introduction of Curriculum for Excellence in 2010 positioned teachers as agents of change and enabled them to influence curriculum development at a micro or classroom level. In short, this means that teachers have scope to make changes to practice to meet children's needs on a local level.

4.7 Data Analysis

Data analysis for this study involved one quantitative and one qualitative dataset. Quantitative data was generated from participants' performance in the YARC. Qualitative data gathered for this study was generated through semi-structured interviews carried out with participants.

4.7.1 Analysis of Standardised Assessment Data

Standardised assessment data for this study was generated by administering the York Assessment of Reading Comprehension (YARC) to all participants pre and post intervention. Content analysis of children's performance pre and post intervention involved examining their YARC scores in

each assessed area of reading to check for progression or regression. This data was then mixed with qualitative data from interviews to establish whether improvement in cognitive knowledge and skills correlated with improved personal and social identity, and social and cultural capital.

4.7.2 Analysis of Semi-structured Interview Responses

Gibbs (2002) describes qualitative data analysis as the researcher's processes to form an understanding and explain the investigated datasets. These datasets can be comprised of data including interviews, observations, participations and written statements. By processing the information contained in the data - through coding, sorting and organisation of themes – the researcher can establish findings that contribute to the field of study.

Criticisms of qualitative data analysis can centre on the relatively small sample sizes typically present in qualitative studies which makes it difficult to know with certainty if findings are representative of the wider population and makes scaling up of studies difficult. In this study's case, scaling up is not the aim of the research I have undertaken. However, there are agreed strengths of qualitative data analysis studies. Qualitative research requires a high level of engagement with the subject and with participants. Additionally, there is abundant “empirical and theoretical evidence to support the robustness, validity and capacity of QDA” (Chowdhury 2014).

As is the case with this study, many researchers advocate the case for using qualitative data analysis alongside quantitative methods. The qualitative approach generates factual data which can be applied to a larger population, while qualitative data analysis produces rich detailed data that accounts for the study's context.

Saldana (2021) states that "Theming the Data: Categorically provides descriptive detail about the patterns observed and constructed by the analyst" (p. 259) and confirms that this process is well-suited to the analysis of interview transcripts. He also contends that the themes developed through this

approach are "applicable for case study research" (p. 260). Saldana also argues that mixed methods studies employ thematic statements to support comparison and integration of quantitative and qualitative datasets.

4.7.3 Thematic Analysis

Thematic analysis is defined by Braun and Clarke (2017) as "a method for identifying, analysing, and interpreting patterns of meaning ('themes') within qualitative data" (p. 297). With reference to this study, Clarke, Braun and Hayfield (2015) contend that thematic analysis is appropriate for research questions that focus on lived experiences and perspectives. Thematic analysis is appropriate for this thesis as it allows the flexibility to analyse commonalities in data across the whole qualitative data set while also allowing the research to focus on ideas implicit in the individual interview responses. It allows for a largely deductive approach to systematic coding and analysis of the data which can then be linked to broader concepts related to the core research questions.

Braun and Clarke (2006), while stating that there is flexibility within them, specify 6 steps to conduct a thematic analysis.

- 1) Data familiarisation and writing familiarisation notes
- 2) Systematic data coding
- 3) Generating initial themes from coded and collated data
- 4) Developing and reviewing themes
- 5) Refining, defining and naming themes
- 6) Writing the report.

There is flexibility and overlap between steps 2-6 in the way they have been applied to this study. The initial cycle of systematic data coding focused on whether participants' intervention experiences had been positive or negative. However, this process did not address the broader themes present in the data (power, access and belonging) and when reviewed during the second coding cycle, the codes evolved to reflect these themes. As mentioned in the literature review, power, access and belonging were defined through the lens of learners' experiences of the intervention. These themes were then further subcategorised to reflect different ways of being powerful, different types of access and different ways of belonging addressed in the data.

4.7.4 Explanation of the coding process used in this study

A combined deductive/inductive approach was taken to analysing the data generated by the interviews. The inductive approach was considered after the data had been analysed and sought to identify themes based on participants' responses. However, for the initial data analysis taking place in cycles 1 and 2, a deductive approach was taken. This allowed coding and interpretation of the data through the lens of experience gained working in this field and research carried out as part of the literature review. This means that the codes applied to the data in the first instance stem from concepts and ideas the researcher already has in place as opposed to coming from the data itself.

The qualitative data gathered from participants' responses was coded in two cycles. Data gathered during this cycle provided an initial understanding of participants' experiences and whether they were positive or negative. The second cycle approached the data from a different perspective, analysing central themes - power, access and belonging - which emerged from responses.

Saldana (2021) defines a code in qualitative analysis as "most often a word or short phrase that symbolically assigns a summative, salient ... attribute for a portion of language-based or visual data" (p. 5). In this case the data consists of sections of interview transcripts generated from pupil interviews.

4.7.5 Affective Coding Methods

The first cycle coding process employed affective coding methods. These examine the emotions, values, conflicts and other aspects of human experience by directly naming those experiences. While it can be argued that this approach does not possess the required robustness or level of objectivity, affective qualities are central to our motivation for action, reaction and interaction (Saldana, 2021).

In particular, the coding process focused on emotions and values expressed by the participants. Emotion coding is considered by Saldana (2021) to be "appropriate for virtually all qualitative studies" (p. 160). He also notes that accurate identification of emotions is more likely to take place through interaction with participants rather than examining written responses. Analysis of transcripts identified power and belonging as the relevant emotion codes.

Furthermore, Values Coding applies codes to data that reflects a participant's values, attitudes and beliefs (Saldana 2021). "Value" is defined as the level of importance we attach to ourselves, others, artefacts and concepts. The values codes in this study were analysed using content analysis and discourse analysis.

4.7.6 First Coding Cycle

The intention of the first coding cycle was to examine the cumulative totals of positive/ negative responses to each intervention, using these totals as an indication of students' experiences of the support they were given which would support answers to the research questions. However, after reflecting on this process, it became clear that a further cycle of coding was necessary to delve deeper into the children's experiences. This approach aligned with Kvale's (1996) view of the semi-structured interview process where "knowledge is viewed as a buried metal, and an interviewer plays the role of a miner" (p. 23).

A further attempt at the first coding cycle focused more on applying emotion coding (which revealed the themes of power and belonging) and values coding (which revealed the theme of access). This helped provide greater insight into pupils' perspectives on the interventions and elevated understanding of their experiences beyond positive or negative. In addition, values coding helped to categorise students' attitudes not just to reading but also to the doors reading could open for them and the way their level of access correlated with their perceived level of success as readers.

4.7.7 Theming the Data by Category

DeSantis and Ugarizza (2000) suggest that like a code or category, a theme “brings meaning and identity to a recurrent experience and its variant manifestations” (p. 362). In this study, themes were identified by noting repetition of ideas expressed in participants responses. Saldana (2021 p.260) contends that theming data by category applies to participant-generated documents, in this case interviews. Saldana also states that themes should be descriptive sentences, giving a richer description of the category than the single word codes. However, in this case, the themes are single word descriptions (such as power) which are then divided into further sub-themes (such as power over institution).

4.7.8 Second Coding Cycle

The second coding cycle sought to further develop categorization of the emergent themes; power, access and belonging. Participant response that expressed a desire for agency or power posed the question “Power over what?”. Similarly, desire for access allowed examination of what participants wanted access to, and the desire to belong raised the question what did they wish to belong to? Therefore, the second coding cycle allowed for wider description of the themes as detailed in the table below.

Table 7. *Emerging themes and sub-themes*

Power			Access			Belonging	
Power Over Institution	Power Over Progress	Power Over Curriculum	Access to texts	Access to Valued Domains	Access to Conversations	Belonging to Peer Groups	Belonging to Institution

4.7.9 Analytic recommendations resulting from affective coding

Saldana (2021) recommends that further analytic work with values coding and emotion coding is positioned in three ways. Firstly, as action and practitioner research, which seeks to effect progress by investigating the researcher's practice and the participants needs; secondly, through content analysis, which involves systematic qualitative analysis of a dataset (in this study, interviews); and finally, through discourse analysis – the examination of texts for embedded and inferred meaning.

4.7.10 Intercooder Reliability vs Intercooder Consistency

Intercooder reliability describes the numerical measure of the level of agreement between two researchers on the coding of the same data sets (O'Connor and Joffe, 2020). It helps ensure that coding is applied consistently and promotes the research's trustworthiness and transparency.

Intercooder consistency involves comparison of additional researchers' comparisons of the data without the need to quantify the level of consensus. Harden (2008) suggests that researchers can independently identify themes emerging from data and then engage in discussion regarding the commonalities this process produces.

Furthermore, coding is a reflexive process which places the subjectivity of the researcher as paramount in the process of thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2019; Clarke & Braun 2013). Therefore, an intercooder reliability score was not calculated and instead I sought to establish intercooder consistency by engaging in discussion with the thesis' 2nd supervisor after she completed a first cycle coding of the data. We coded separately and could see overlap of themes and interpretations, which ensured consistency.

This process employed more micro-level codes than the initial coding cycle but correlated with the broader codes used in the initial coding cycle and both coders were able to see the overlapping commonalities present in their individual coding processes.

4.7.11 Validity and Reliability

Validity and reliability are central to qualitative inquiry (Morse et al., 2002) who state that “Without rigor, research is worthless, becomes fiction, and loses its utility. Hence, a great deal of attention is applied to reliability and validity in all research methods” (p. 14). While validity and reliability may be applied to qualitative research differently than in quantitative research, they are still an important component in qualitative inquiry. Indeed, any other conclusion implies that qualitative research is, by its nature, unreliable and invalid.

Cho and Trent (2006) discuss transactional reliability and transformational reliability. They describe the transactional approach as being based on interaction between inquiry and research with the researcher making use of techniques such as member checking, bracketing and triangulation. Transformational reliability only considers research to be valid if it achieves an eventual ideal. They state that “the question of validity in itself is convergent with the way the researcher self-reflects, both explicitly and implicitly, upon the multiple dimensions in which the inquiry is conducted” (p. 324). Therefore, Cho and Trent do not consider it possible for validity to be achieved simply through using the practices listed above. In the context of this research, this meant making sure that the data gathered was verifiable and as complete as is possible for the study. It also meant the participants had to engage with the interventions, interviews and testing processes to provide data that could be verified through triangulation or, as would be the case as the data analysis progressed, crystallisation. Furthermore, as the study progressed it became apparent that reliability of the quantitative data to speak to the research question was limited, making the contribution of the qualitative data ever more important. It is

therefore the way that the data is treated – crystallised rather than triangulated – that makes the findings trustworthy and credible. Finally, the researcher must maintain an objective stance (Cohen et al., 2011) which, in the context of this project, meant allowing the data to speak for itself and for each layer of data to support the crystallisation of findings.

I have adapted the table presented by Cho and Trent (2006), based on Donmoyer's alternative approach to validity (2001) to determine the validity of this thesis.

Table 8. *Purposes Supporting Qualitative Research in this study*

Purpose	Fundamental Questions	Validity Criteria	In this research ...
Truth Seeking	What is the correct answer?	Member check Causality based triangulation	Ask participants if notes were correct at the end of each session.
Thick Description	How do the people under study interpret the phenomena?	Triangulated, descriptive data Knowledge of daily life Member check as recursive	Provide detailed explanations of terminology and events.
Personal Essay	What is the researcher's personal interpretation?	Self-assessment of experience	Researcher diary reflecting on my experiences and interpretations of events

It is also important to stress the importance of trustworthiness in qualitative research. Creswell (2014) suggests a series of strategies to check the accuracy of findings in qualitative research. Firstly, to crystallise findings – the process of using different sets of data to answer research questions – a researcher should examine different data sources to construct a coherent justification of themes. This was made possible by employing a range of data-collection tools to gather information and by collecting and analysing both quantitative and qualitative data. I was also able to check the accuracy of the

findings by sharing notes with participants post-interview to check that they were a true reflection of our conversations.

While the steps described above ensure trustworthiness in the data and research, I also felt that it was important to maintain the trust of the children involved who were, in some cases, nervous about their interviews being recorded. This was achieved through creating a reciprocal relationship with the children involved in the study, ensuring that they were aware that taking part not only provided the researcher with data but also provided them with opportunities to develop and improve as readers. The importance of reciprocity is supported by Guillemin et al., (2016), who emphasises “the importance of not just taking from participants but ensuring that a reciprocal relationship is established and respected— something relevant to all human research.” (p. 378). Guillemin et al’s focus on the "reciprocal relationship" helps us to understand the importance of participants in the project feeling a tangible benefit of their involvement, not just the researcher. As a teacher-researcher who would have an ongoing relationship with participants and their families it was important to me that the children involved felt that the project supported their improvement as readers, their sense of belonging to the school, and their feelings of power, agency and that their views and opinions were valued. There was also reciprocity between the research I was conducting and the setting in which it was carried out. My role as teacher-researcher ensured that my approaches were aligned with the pedagogical practices of the school and local authority. This ensured that the project had a sense of familiarity for participants and colleagues who could recognise elements of their own practices within it.

The process also involved using thick description to convey findings by sharing experiences encountered during the research. This allowed me to provide detailed accounts of the events I witnessed. I also clarified potential research bias by being clear about my position in the school and my relationships with participants. I felt that it was important to emphasise that their contributions or any findings would not have any adverse effect on their position in school, class, or intervention. I presented

and discussed data even when it did not fit or support emerging themes. I felt that it was important to demonstrate honesty and to be open to the possibility that the results or findings may not reflect my initial expectations. For example, as discussed in more detail later in chapters four and five, some participants did not improve attainment based on quantitative measures used to measure progress. Working in the establishment where the study took place allowed me to spend prolonged time in the field and to gain an in-depth understanding of the site and the children involved. I was fortunate to have almost unlimited time in the setting which aided my understanding of the context.

Reflective practice, advocated by Schon (1983), who further developed Dewey's (1933) pivotal ideas on reflection through observing how practitioners think in action, can support researchers in ensuring rigour in their interpretation of the data. Schon's consideration of reflective practice stemmed from the fact that he disagreed with the concept that a teacher simply delivers the knowledge of others. He argued that teachers must reflect on the context of learning and teaching in their classroom in social, economic and political terms. It is further promoted by Tremmel who states that "... the way of teaching demands a long journey that does not have any easily identifiable destination ... It is a journey that I believe must include a backward step into the self and it is a journey that is its own destination" (Tremmel, 1993, p. 456). Therefore, for a practitioner to develop their knowledge of a subject, they must first consider their own learning and how their experiences position them in the study. The "backward step" referred to by Tremmel was reflected in my own experience throughout this project in various ways. Firstly, I had to reconsider my understanding of children who were designated "struggling" or "reluctant" and recognise that, as discussed in chapter 3.7, deficit labels such as these did not give a sufficient information to be able to support them to improve as readers and encourage teachers to-segregate children on account of their differences. Additionally, as will be discussed later in this chapter, I had to reframe my understanding of the use of standardised assessments and the prominence given to quantitative data.

Finally, the trustworthiness of this research was aided by the fact that I could engage in peer-debriefing with my supervisors. We held regular supervision meetings where I had the opportunity to check and discuss my work with them.

4.8 Limitations and Reflections on Methodology

This section will explore the limitations of the thesis and recount reflections on the process. Possible limitations caused by the circumstances in which the study was situated include those caused by the researcher's role in the project and the impact of Covid-19.

In reflecting on methodology, this section will also address the data collection tools and the different nature and perceived value of the data they generated. It will then discuss the way in which the research journey described in the thesis moved from triangulation of data to crystallisation.

4.8.1 Limitations

This thesis emerged from my remit in the Scottish secondary school I was employed in, and my further study in M.Ed modules at the University of Strathclyde. The participants in the study were selected from a group of volunteers from across the five associated primary schools in our cluster, rather than being randomly selected, and the participants had a relationship with me as a teacher in their school and from the early part of the transition process. This could have impacted their answers in the interview due to a need for them to feel like they were providing the answers a teacher or researcher would want to hear. However, it is also important to consider that there are benefits of having a pre-existing relationship with children. They can feel relaxed in the researcher's company and empowered to provide truthful and accurate responses.

The study was impacted by Covid-19 and the subsequent periodic school closures from March 2020 until March 2021. The interruptions and government enforced covid restrictions meant only

Andrew and Bree were given a proper pre- and post-intervention interview. Cara, Daniel, Erin and Fern were interviewed at the end of their intervention and asked to reflect on their feelings prior to taking part. While this may have had an impact on their responses and created an inconsistency in the interview process, it was a limitation caused by unique circumstances. I would also have preferred to have had more involvement from primary colleagues in building the literacy profile of the participants and spent more time with them in primary setting to have even stronger evidence of what was the most appropriate intervention. Further insight and consultation with parents and children who participated in the interventions would have been desirable. Covid-19 restrictions also meant that the research diary and field observations were combined into a single document containing reflections on different aspects of the project such as interviews and in-class behaviours of participants. The absence of these layers of data in some respects limited the extent to which the individual experiences of children could be crystallised to illustrate their reality. Conversations with parents and more detailed field notes could have provided an additional lens through which those experiences were viewed.

Additionally, the fact that I was working full time as a teacher meant that I selected methods and processes that were pedagogically aligned with the work that was already underway in my school and the primary schools in the cluster. This alignment was important to ensure the feasibility of the project and to ensure that it was achievable within the parameters of my professional responsibilities. Furthermore, the opportunity to gather more robust and in-depth data, including more layers of data collection with learners could have provided further insight. A larger scale project with more participants may also have added a layer of richness to the findings if the same themes were to emerge.

4.8.2 Reflections on the use of semi-structured interviews

Possible limitations to this thesis also lie in the use of semi-structured Interviews as a data collection tool. The wide range of possible responses provided in interviews can reduce the

comparability of responses. They are also conversational in tone, allowing the interviewee to develop a story or narrative that acutely focuses on their own experiences (Menter et al., 2011). Furthermore, given that Covid restrictions meant that it was not possible to check or revisit my interpretation of their construction of the experience of the interventions, participants had no opportunity to confirm whether those interpretations were genuinely reflective of their experience. However, it is also important to acknowledge that these factors in some ways support the choice of the constructivist paradigm and the mixed methods research design as they acknowledge the differences between participants and the responses they offer. Given the constructivist stance adopted in this study, views that are individual, and which speak to the individual's experience of the programme are desirable.

Crystallisation will be discussed later in this section, but the use of semi-structured interviews allowed the views of each participant to be treated as their truth and to stand on their own merits as a reliable account of their experiences.

4.8.3 Reflections of the use of the York Assessment of Reading Comprehension

The study also made use of the YARC assessment to provide quantitative measures of progress and attainment in different aspects of reading. The YARC was the tool used across the local authority to provide standardised data on reading attainment. It was also used as a diagnostic tool to dig deeper into children's performance in different areas of reading when the class teacher suspected a difficulty in reading. Training was provided by experienced members of the local authority central team in its use and in interpretation of the data. It is important to note that there are other standardised assessment tools available and YARC is not used by every local authority in the country. The Scottish National Survey of Achievement may also provide a quantitative measure if this process were to be carried out at scale.

At the beginning of the project the decision to adopt a mixed methods case study approach was taken partly to ensure the presence of robust quantitative data in the project. I felt that this was a

necessary step to lend the project and any subsequent findings a level of credibility that may not have been possible to gain by relying solely on a qualitative dataset generated by semi-structure interviews. I also felt that there was a certain illustrative value in being able to provide colleagues with data in the form of reading ages that helped them to visualise the severity of the barrier a child may face as a reader in their class. For example, an 11-year-old child with a reading age of 6 years and 3 months would require support to access an S1 curriculum designed for children who were at least 11 years of age.

However, as the project progressed, I began to question the suitability of the YARC in this context for several reasons. Firstly, the use of the YARC as a tool to help determine participation in a phonics intervention now seems flawed. While the YARC measures fluency, reading accuracy, reading comprehension and reading rate, it does not directly measure phonological awareness or accuracy in the use of, or proficiency in, phonics. Additionally, while the YARC provides a measure of performance pre and post intervention in the aforementioned areas it does not tell the story of children's experiences, including how they felt, the impact of the intervention on their identity as a reader or the ability of the intervention to support a sustained interest in reading for pleasure.

The use of the YARC as a measure that would triangulate with interview data to provide a rounded description of children's experiences therefore seemed as though it would have limited impact. Therefore, while the YARC data retained importance as an indication of the success or otherwise of interventions, it was considered alongside the qualitative data as a means of crystallisation rather than triangulation.

4.8.4 Crystallisation

Crystallisation is described by Ellingson (2009) as combining 'multiple forms of analysis and multiple genres of representation into a coherent text or series of related texts, building a rich and openly partial account of a phenomenon that problematizes its own construction, highlights

researchers' vulnerabilities and positionality, makes claims about socially constructed meanings, and reveals the indeterminacy of knowledge claims even as it makes them (p. 4). It positions the quantitative and qualitative data generated in this study as part of a patchwork of understanding that can be gained by considering each participant's story as a valid version of the truth of their experience. This means that multiple versions of truth are possible which is supported by Geertz (1973) who explains that "Multiple ways of understanding and representing participants' experiences not only provide more description but more points of connection through their angles of vision on a given topic" (p. 15). Geertz also emphasises that crystallisation allows us to see the same experience in different ways. In the case of this study this allows the interventions to be viewed as the individual experience of the participant. Rather than those experiences being triangulated with the quantitative data to create a truth, each experience provides insights into a phenomenon and, together enables a researcher to build a clearer understanding of what is happening in a particular context. Crystallisation, therefore, promotes the contextualised investigation and analysis of the problem laid out in the research question. This aligns with the constructivist paradigm within which this study is located.

The strength of crystallisation is further advocated by Ellingson (2014) who comments that the "strength of crystallization is the flexibility in its utilization, from adoption of crystallization as an overarching framework to incorporation of just one or a few of its tenants to augment a more traditional research design" (p. 7). This helps to confirm that crystallisation contributes to the richness of understanding of the data gathered for this project. It allows for a deeper contextualisation of data analysis that is responsive to changing circumstances. In this mixed methods case study, the value of the YARC data for understanding learners' experiences and the effects that the interventions had on them became limited, revealing the need to focus more acutely on the data generated from semi-structured interviews. Traditional data triangulation might have suggested giving equal attention to quantitative and qualitative datasets. Instead, a focus on crystallisation – and allowing the data to speak for itself –

facilitated a more organic responsiveness in data analysis, enabling me to attend to the data in ways that were relevant to the research aims.

4.9 Chapter Summary

This chapter provided an overview of what each reading programme involved, before specifying the methods used to answer the research question: What were the experiences of struggling and reluctant readers at transition of three interventions, particularly in relation to the dimensions of the three-domains model, namely: a) Cognitive knowledge and skills, b) identity and agency, and c) social and cultural capital.

The chapter began by introducing and justifying the constructivist ontological stance adopted in the project. It then described the features of each reading intervention programme, followed by a discussion around the methodology adopted in this research. The chapter then considered how concerns such as recruitment and sampling were attended to before discussing ethics, positionality, informed consent and power imbalances, and the consideration given to possible impact on participants' school experience. The chapter then turns its attention to discussing the processes for data analysis. Finally, the chapter closes by reflecting on possible limitations of the methodological approach taken as well as the impact of covid. It considers gaps that may exist because of the use of the York Assessment of Reading Comprehension (YARC) and semi-structured interviews as data collection tools and discusses the importance of crystallisation, rather than triangulation, as a more effective lens for ensuring trustworthiness, credibility and integrity of the data.

Chapter Five: Case Studies

5.0 Chapter Overview

This chapter presents a case study for each participant in order to answer the research questions:

What were the experiences of struggling and reluctant readers at transition of three interventions, particularly in relation to the dimensions of the three-domains model, namely: a) Cognitive knowledge and skills, b) identity and agency, and c) social and cultural capital.

The chapter outlines the context and nature of the data and describes how it is organised. This gives voice to their feelings towards and experiences in the interventions they accessed and ascertains the impact on their attitudes to reading and tracks changes to their attainment in reading. Findings from interviews, supported by field notes, observations and reflections, focus on three key themes, related to power, access and belonging.

5.1 Data and Participants in Context

Findings in this section are comprised of pupil responses to semi-structured interview questions (appendix four). Each pupil completed a YARC pre and post intervention. Parts of this study were interrupted by school closures resulting from Covid-19. This impact is described in more detail in chapter three. However, it is important to recognise that the interviews referred to in this chapter were delayed and, in some cases, combined due to the restrictions imposed on schools at the time of the pandemic.

In the case studies that follow readers will meet each of the participants and be presented with a selection of their interview answers and their pre and post intervention assessment results. Each participant was an S1 pupil at the school at the time of the intervention. The town in which the school is

located in a post-industrial suburban area. Geographically, the school lies on the border of a neighbouring local authority and some pupils request to attend due to its proximity to their home. The town itself houses a large medical facility, major supermarket retailers, a small retail park and a swimming pool and leisure centre. These amenities also provide most of the local employment in the town. There is also a public library which has recently been refurbished. The school's catchment area spans just over 8 miles, with some children travelling to school by bus. As a result, children who attend the school rarely identify as being from the town itself, but rather the surrounding, smaller towns they live in.

5.1.1 Character of the participant cohort in this study

The table below lists the participants (using pseudonyms), the interventions they accessed and their SIMD profile.

Table 9. *Interventions, Participants, and SIMD*

Participant	Intervention	SIMD
Andrew	<i>Reading Ambassadors</i>	2
Bree	<i>Reading Ambassadors</i>	2
Cara	<i>Read Write Inc: Fresh Start</i>	1
Daniel	<i>Read Write Inc: Fresh Start</i>	2
Erin	<i>After School Reading Club</i>	1
Fern	<i>After School Reading Club</i>	2

The main statistical tool used by school, local authority and government staff help to determine the level of poverty facing children is the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (simd.scot). The scale is split into deciles, with decile one being the most deprived and decile ten being the least deprived. If an area is identified as being deprived this can refer to low household income but also to available resources and opportunities in the area. However, the cluster of schools in this study identified that the use of postcodes to assess levels of deprivation failed to account for local nuances in housing, particularly the use of private, rented accommodation which led to over and under estimation of the level of poverty children were living in. Tensions regarding SIMD are explored by Paterson et al., (2019) who argue that steps taken to close the poverty-related attainment gap using SIMD as a tool to identify children who need support “potentially miss most students who ought to benefit” (p. 11). They also point out that the danger that this approach may “confer even further advantages on already advantaged students if they live in deprived neighbourhoods” (p. 11). This reflects and reinforces the challenge faced in this context around the aforementioned local nuances in housing. Furthermore, the factors affecting the lives of children in this area go beyond economic poverty. They also suffer from a lack of opportunities in employment and a dearth of local amenities.

The children who participated in this study were situated in deciles 1-2 of the SIMD and who transitioned to the secondary school I was employed at when the study began. As mentioned in the previous paragraph, this means that they lived in and attended school in areas classed as highly deprived and where children were more likely to experience the poverty-related attainment gap. The six participants had been identified by their P7 teacher as being either a struggling or reluctant reader, with little motivation or interest in reading being shown in class.

Overall, the young people involved in this study were able to identify the ways in which the intervention had impacted upon them as a reader and how they felt towards the intervention they

participated in. My research observations and reflections were used alongside the semi-structured interviews and YARC assessments. Interview data was gathered and analysed for all six participants.

5.1.2 Presentation of Qualitative Data

The data in this section is presented by analysing interview responses from participants from each intervention. The examination of interview responses from individual pupils reflects their unique experiences of the intervention and takes account of the fact that pupils may not respond in the same way to the same intervention.

Full transcripts of interviews can be found in appendix five. A breakdown of the frequency of participant utterances related to power, access and belonging can be found in appendix six.

Case studies are grouped and presented in line with the intervention the children participated in.

5.1.3 Explanation of Tables and Graphs Used to Present Quantitative Data

The York Assessment of Reading Comprehension measures performance in single word reading, reading rate, comprehension, accuracy and fluency. The test provides data in the form of raw scores (ability score) a standardised score, the confidence intervals for each score, their percentile rank within the cohort of learners tested and their age equivalent scores which provides a reading age. Standardised scores below 95 are a poor age-related performance, while standardised scores beyond 100 are a high age-related performance.

Pre and post intervention graphs are provided for each participant at the beginning of each case study.

5.2 Case Study One: Andrew (*Reading Ambassadors*)

Andrew was involved in the *Reading Ambassadors* programme. This intervention began for him in September of S1. His family engaged well with the school, attending transition events and parents' evenings. They also supported him in his interests, buying books they thought he would enjoy and discussing them with him. Andrew has always performed well in most subject areas of school. Primary staff had advised that he was a quiet pupil who was occasionally withdrawn and could be detached from his peers. He was recommended as a candidate for *Reading Ambassadors* as primary colleagues thought he may benefit from the social aspect of the intervention as well as tackling his reluctance to engage in personal reading. The P7 teacher judgement of Andrew's literacy skills placed him as working on 2nd Level by the end of primary school. He did not access any interventions in primary school, but teachers stated that he was reluctant to engage with reading activities, reading aloud and did his best to avoid choosing a text when reading for pleasure.

Andrew's experience of the transition process and the intervention was interrupted by the pandemic which began in March 2020. He started secondary school in September 2020 under restrictions at a time when access to facilities such as the school library were extremely limited between August and December. In January 2021, Scottish schools closed, and the school featured in this study moved to online learning. Despite this Andrew was still able to take part in *Reading Ambassadors*, both in school and during lockdown, which involved selecting high interest texts and engaging in conversations with PGDE students from Strathclyde University on a weekly basis over the course of 6 weeks. The experience was somewhat different to what was intended but Andrew still responded positively. He engaged with the intervention, read and enjoyed his book between sessions, and encouraged others during conversations. Impressively, he coped well with the changes forced by covid and enjoyed in-person and online engagements in equal measure.

5.2.1 YARC Assessment Scores: Andrew

A YARC was carried out on Andrew at the end of P7 (pre) and at the end of S1 (post).

Figure 3. Andrew pre-intervention

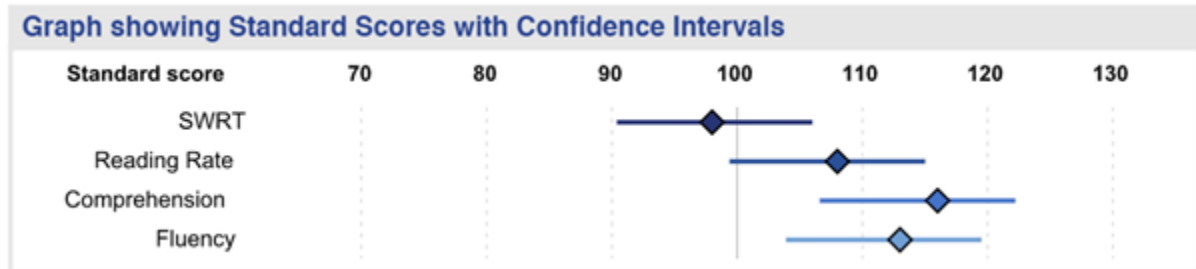
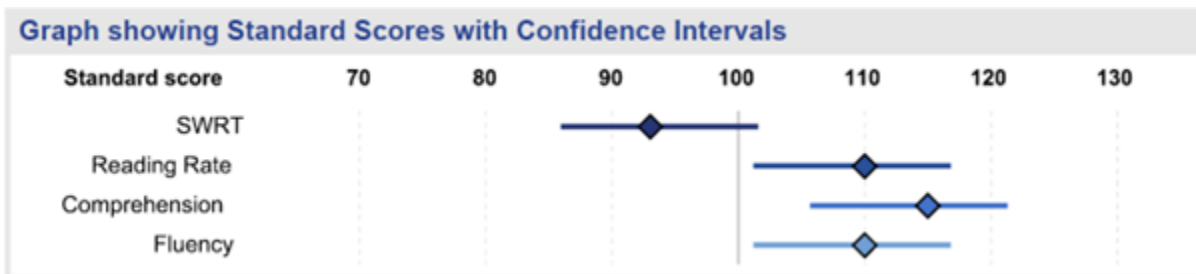


Figure 4. Andrew post-intervention



Andrew's initial YARC test (beginning of S1) demonstrated that, other than in Single Word Reading, he performed beyond his age and expected standardised score in all aspects of reading, and was particularly strong in comprehension and in reading rate. His summarisation scores were classed as average but there is an aspect of this that is counter-intuitive – pupils are encouraged to summarise as concisely as possible which may mean that they include fewer relevant points in a summary than we may want or expect.

Andrew's retest was carried out in June 2021. His results must be viewed through the lens of the restrictions imposed on schools because of the pandemic. His performance in Single Word Reading remained the same. This was the weakest aspect of Andrew's initial test and indicates that his reading may not be wide enough to allow him the necessary exposure to new vocabulary.

Andrew's reading ability indicated that he was capable of learning and understanding new vocabulary. Performance in comprehension remained largely static but remained well in advance of the expected performance for a pupil his age and there is a similar story with his fluency.

These results can be viewed in two ways. Firstly, despite the interruption to in school education there was no significant drop off in performance. Secondly, Andrew is still performing in advance of his age in most aspects of reading but as previously mentioned, could benefit from reading more widely. Participation in *Reading Ambassadors* helped Andrew to broaden his horizons when it came to the texts he was interested in reading.

5.2.2 Key Themes emerging from Andrew's interviews

This section discusses the data that was collected from Andrew, who participated in the *Reading Ambassadors* intervention, across the three emergent themes; power, access and belonging. As mentioned in chapter 4.7.1, *Reading Ambassadors* was an intervention designed in school to support children whose data indicated were capable of reading but unlikely to do so for a variety of reasons including, motivation, access to texts and interest. This intervention encouraged dialogue around the texts children had chosen. Initially, participants held conversations with senior pupils in the school, before engaging online with PGDE students from the University of Strathclyde.

5.2.3 Power

Andrew highlighted Power Over Institution as an important factor in considering his school experience and, more specifically, his experience as a reader.

The importance of Power Over Institution, which dealt with how participants felt about their level of influence and agency in relation to the school they had transitioned to, was highlighted by the

following examples from Andrew's interview responses. One exchange with Andrew that highlighted Power over Institution is presented below:

PDM: What do you think is the difference between this project and the reading we do in class? I guess the difference between the type of reading we ask you to do on this project and the reading you do elsewhere.

Andrew: I guess at Primary school it was more like you would read and then do a task or answer questions on it. A lot of it was like 'do you know what this word means?' You would read but you always had to do a task.

PDM: Is that quite frustrating? If you're reading a book and you enjoy it, we make you stop and answer questions on it.

Andrew: You just learn it's the way the class works.

Andrew's response that "you would read, but you always had to do a task" and "you learn it's the way the class works" highlighted the lack of agency he felt he had as a learner, demonstrating instead his need to change and 'fit with' the institutional ways of thinking, being and doing.

Andrew also highlighted the importance of Power Over Curriculum. This was demonstrated by the following data gathered in response to interview questions related to the differences between reading at home and reading in school and the level of personalisation and choice afforded students in this context. The exchange with Andrew presented below highlights Power over Curriculum.

PDM: That's brilliant. So, you're telling me that you are quite a good reader, and I would agree but how do you know that?

Andrew: Well, I read a lot back then and I noticed that no one in my class read too much when they went home. Some did but probably less than half the class.

PDM: That's brilliant. So, you could see that you were one of the people who did read. What was your experience of reading in Primary school?

Andrew: It just depended on the book really. I quite liked it but if it's a book I didn't like it could be boring.

PDM: Yeah. And obviously in this project we're doing you got to choose the book and it makes a difference if you're interested in it doesn't it?

Andrew: Yeah

Andrew's Power Over Curriculum was shown through his understanding that he was a good reader and based his judgement on the out-of-school reading behaviours of his classmates. However, he also indicated that he found reading boring if the book did not hold any interest for him.

Andrew also identified Power Over Progress as an important consideration in his interview responses. In the exchange below, Andrew discusses how he feels about progress and how he can influence it:

PDM: So, would you say *Reading Ambassadors* improved you as a reader?

Andrew: Yeah, I would. I read before but it made me more confident and made me realise things more when I was reading. I'm getting better at picking up hints when I read.

PDM: Would you say that has been the main thing – the level of confidence?

Andrew: Yeah. And also like I said before, it motivated me to read more. It made me realise I should read more, then you do it and you start to enjoy it.

Andrew demonstrated in this part of the interview that he understood the impact the intervention had on him and that when he is motivated to read, he can contribute to his own progress.

Additionally, Andrew demonstrated his understanding of the power he has over his own progress in the following exchange:

PDM: You've probably already touched on this but why is it important to keep improving? You're a good reader anyway but why is it important to move on from the level you were at, at the end of P7?

Andrew: If you stopped there, you wouldn't learn anything new. I know there is stuff in some subjects I need to know and get better at.

Again, Andrew made the link between his performance in reading and the way improvement in that area can support progress in other areas of the curriculum.

5.2.4 Access

Access to Texts was demonstrably important for Andrew and the following responses were gathered in relation to interview questions enquiring about his reading behaviours, including interactions with his parents, outside of school.

Andrew positioned Access to Texts as an important factor at the following stage of the interview:

PDM: And thinking of socials where you've just come from, do you find that having more experience as a reader helps you?

Andrew: Yeah. I would say I can understand passages much more clearly now.

PDM: So, the next thing to think about is whether you read more now as a result of taking part in *Reading Ambassadors*?

Andrew: Yeah. I've been reading Star Wars books, and I've started to read comics, so I've started to read more because of that.

Andrew raised what he felt were two important aspects of gaining access to texts in this section of the interview. Firstly, he again equated his improved attitude to reading with the ability to access texts in other areas of the curriculum. Additionally, he mentioned that he now read more widely, delving into Star Wars books and comics.

Access to Valued Domains was also important for Andrew and the following responses were gathered in relation to interview questions which focused on reading as a portable skill that can impact his life beyond the classroom. He demonstrated how reading helped him access subject areas he valued in the section below.

PDM: Do you find that you use a lot of reading in Socials? Is that a skill you rely on in that subject?

Andrew: Yeah, I use it a lot, especially in history when we have to read to find the answers to questions.

Access was also shown to be a key theme through responses that placed importance on Access to Conversations. Andrew related to the importance of access to conversations in the following section:

PDM: So, I'm going to start off by thinking about *Reading Ambassadors* and how you feel about it. Now that you've been through it how do you view it and has it changed your view of yourself as a reader?

Andrew: I think it has motivated me to read more. We've been talking about the books a lot and I quite enjoy it.

It was interesting that Andrew equated the opportunity to discuss the texts he is reading with his enjoyment of reading.

5.2.5 Belonging

Belonging to Peer groups featured prominently in participants' responses. Andrew's responses related to the intervention's impact on his sense of belonging to his peer groups:

PDM: Yes. And in your previous interview you talked about how reading was a social thing for you and that confirms that.

Andrew: Yeah. I have a friend who reads comics and a lot of the time we talk about them and talk about what's going on in them. If I didn't read or couldn't read, we wouldn't be as friendly.

5.3 Case Study Two: Bree (*Reading Ambassadors*)

Bree was involved in the *Reading Ambassadors* programme. She is a pupil who enjoys reading but is much more interested in texts she chooses as opposed to texts studied in class. She enjoys reading online and introduced adults in the school to the “one-shot”, a type of short story that stands alone and is not related to any other text. She also enjoys gaming-related reading such as the “Five Nights at Freddy’s” series and has a particular interest in horror. This intervention began for her in September of S1. She has a supportive family and engages well with school, with high attendance and a good relationship with her peers and teachers. She has two older sisters who struggled in school and who could occasionally communicate distressed behaviour. Primary transition information indicated that Bree was a bright student, but one who did not always engage with tasks in school and was reluctant to read aloud or engage with the school library. She sometimes challenged authority but through articulately expressing an idea or opinion as opposed to in a confrontational way. The P7 teacher judgement of Bree’s literacy skills placed her as working at the lower end of 2nd Level by the end of primary school.

Bree’s experience of the intervention was also impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic, and she found her initial time at secondary interrupted by restrictions to facilities such as the school library. She was also unable to engage in any significant group work or face to face dialogue with peers and engaged with the intervention online from December 2020 onwards. This involved selecting texts that were of high interest to her and engaging in conversations with PGDE students from Strathclyde University on a weekly basis over the course of 6 weeks. Bree responded positively to the intervention despite the changes and limitations she experienced. She engaged with the text and was keen to participate in

conversations with peers. I observed that she seemed to particularly enjoy conversations with PGDE students and felt valued through her dialogue with them.

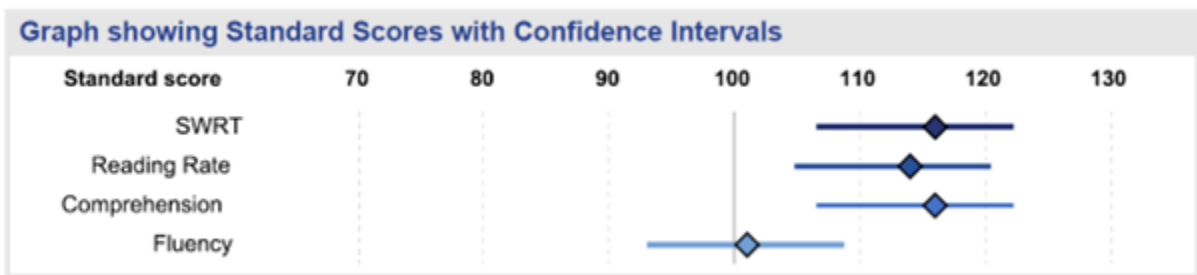
5.3.1 Bree: YARC Assessment Scores

A YARC was carried out on Bree at the end of P7 (pre) and at the end of S1 (post).

Figure 5. Bree pre-intervention



Figure 6. Bree post-intervention



Bree’s initial YARC test (beginning of S1) demonstrated that she had performed beyond her expected standardised score in all aspects of reading measured by the YARC. Similarly, to Andrew, her summarisation scores were classed as average but, as previously explained, there is something counter-intuitive with this measure as the request to summarise encourages brevity, meaning more advanced pupils are inclined to include as few points as possible when summarising their text.

Bree’s retest took place in June 2021. Her results also must be viewed in the context of the pandemic meaning that her school experience and the support she could access at this time was limited. Her performance in all aspects of reading remained high and beyond her expected standardised score. Her performance in Single Word Reading and in comprehension remained the same. There was a slight

decline in reading rate and reading fluency, but this can possibly be attributed to reduced opportunities to engage in these practices because of restrictions and school closures. Importantly, this decline did not have an impact on her comprehension.

5.3.2 Key Themes emerging from Bree's interviews

This section discusses the data that was collected from Bree, who like Andrew, participated in the *Reading Ambassadors* intervention. The data is again analysed across the three emergent themes; power, access and belonging.

5.3.3 Power

Bree also highlighted Power Over Institution as an important factor in her in-school reading experience.

An exchange with Bree that related to power over institution is described below:

PDM: And what aspect of it was it that made you do that – the novels, access to new texts, access to people to talk to?

Bree: I do really like talking to people, but I did like most of the books too. I did find something with the *Peaky Blinders* book. I really like History and mythology, I always have, but when I picked that up it turns out it was a bit of a chore. Because I had to do it for school it was a bit dull. The type of book it was, like it was just a large Wikipedia page and that wasn't very good.

Bree's explanation that "... it turns out it was a bit of a chore. Because I had to do it for school it was a bit dull" again highlights the lack of power she feels she has when it comes to the way she engages with texts, and the types of text she can engage with, within the school framework.

Bree indicated a link to Power Over Curriculum in the dialogue presented below:

PDM: So, I'm probably going to tap into something you mentioned earlier but what kind of reader do you think you are and how do you know? What was reading like at Primary school?

Bree: I enjoyed some of them. I was a bit bummed out that we didn't get to do 'War Horse' as I like history. It was kind of boring and I was unenthusiastic about it because I didn't like the premise. It wasn't something I would be interested in.

Again, this exchange demonstrated that Bree had ideas and opinions around texts, that she had preferences over what she would like to read but her choices did not fit with the curriculum, and the texts she read did not motivate her.

5.3.4 Access

Bree's answers demonstrated the importance of Access to Texts when she discussed a wide range of multimodal texts that she accesses, highlighting the diverse nature of what we mean by "text" that she brings to her reading.

PDM: So, next question. Since you've taken part in *Reading Ambassadors*, and we got you those books, do you feel that you read more at home than you did?

Bree: Yes! I've got quite a few books in my house. There's obviously the one I was reading for *Reading Ambassadors* and the ones my dad has got for me and my library books. I read quite a lot on my phone too. I read a lot of digital novels.

Bree demonstrated several ways of accessing texts that, as a teacher, were new to me. She spoke of her use of Wattpad and the reading she engages in when playing point and click computer games. While this reading does not align with typical classroom practice, it highlights the different approaches to reading that can be taken by children.

Bree also recognised the impact of reading in accessing other areas of the curriculum in the following section:

PDM: Do you think *Reading Ambassadors* will help you to improve in other areas of learning?

Bree: Probably because it'll help my concentration.

Bree valued access to conversations. She placed importance on the opportunity to discuss the texts and linked it to discussions she had with her dad around their shared interests:

PDM: What did you like about it [the intervention]?

Bree: I liked that I had something to read, and I liked having someone to talk to about it. I like sinking my teeth into fictional worlds. That's what I do with my dad a lot. I've just watched my first anime, and we talk about that a lot as he has similar tastes to me.

It was notable that Bree linked part of the enjoyment she gained from reading to the access to social opportunities it provided, in this instance, the conversations she had with her dad around texts they both shared and enjoyed.

5.3.5 Belonging

Responses from Bree demonstrated that she placed limited importance on the idea of Belonging to Institution. She commented on this by discussing how a sense of positive interdependence made her want to read from week to week so that she could contribute to the discussions:

PDM: So – *Reading Ambassadors* – do you think it has helped you as a reader?

Bree: It has given me more motivation to read so that I could talk about it. So, I suppose it has given me the idea that I'm going to read more and that I quite like it.

Again, the social aspect of the intervention proved to be a motivational factor for Bree, encouraging her to read because she enjoyed being part of the conversations she had with her *Reading Ambassadors* group.

Bree's responses related to the intervention's impact on her sense of belonging to her peer groups and the sense of responsibility it instilled in her.

PDM: What you've said is interesting though as my purpose with RA was to have you pick your own book and have no pressure to read. Did you still feel that pressure because you had those sessions coming up?

Bree: Yeah, I didn't really want to be the one who hadn't read anything.

5.4 Summary of interview responses and standardised assessments from Andrew and Bree (*Reading Ambassadors*)

Interview responses from Andrew and Bree indicated a sense of resignation and powerlessness when it came to the school curriculum and the idea of interest and choice. The lack of choice negatively impacted their attitude towards reading in a school setting. Their experience of reading in the classroom was often transactional, with the act of reading invariably followed up by a task and the notion that if you wanted to enjoy the book, you had to engage with the tasks before being allowed to read further. Participants indicated that these practices negatively affected their engagement and therefore, their progress. Progress was also dependent on whether they felt the texts studied in class were reflective of their experiences and had importance in their lives. If the text chosen by the teacher did not feel situated within their lives or communities, they did not engage and appeared to be failing to make progress. This aligns with the discussion featured in Moll et al., (2006) around the importance of making connections between home and school literacy practices. Additionally, it aligns with the exploration of the Three Domains tool (Ellis & Smith, 2017) in chapter two and stresses the importance of attending to more than just cognitive knowledge and skills. Contrastingly, the texts both Andrew and Bree selected for *Reading Ambassadors* were interesting to them in a way that class texts were not. This interest increased their motivation to read those specific texts, which dealt with areas of culture or society that they had expressed an interest in such as sport, music, gaming, historical figures or science. Additionally, the social aspect of *Reading Ambassadors* and the aspects of positive interdependence it encouraged increased the levels of motivation in Bree as she did not want to let her group down and felt a sense of responsibility towards them. This provided motivation to continue with her reading each week, meaning motivation was sourced from her sense of belonging as well as interest in the text.

Andrew and Bree both recognised the importance of reading as a vehicle for improvement in other curricular areas and as a skill they were motivated to develop despite their views of the classroom experience. They made the link between improving as readers and being able to improve performance in other areas of learning but crucially, when Andrew commented that

“If you stopped there, you wouldn’t learn anything new. I know there’s stuff in some subjects I need to know and get better at”,

He also linked the intervention and Reading for Pleasure to that improvement. Both participants could also see a positive impact on their social capital from their reading practices. They reported increased confidence contributing to discussions around texts within their social circles with Andrew discussing texts with his peers and Bree joking that she dominated the conversation with PGDE students – behaviours they would not perhaps have exhibited before.

In terms of attainment, Andrew and Bree had a high starting point based on their initial YARC data. Both reading rate and reading comprehension scores remained high for both pupils, far in advance of their expected outcome. Another commonality was that both pupils, while still performing beyond expectations in reading fluency did not see that skill continue to progress and in the case of Bree, performed slightly worse than in the initial assessment.

5.5 Case Study Three: Cara

Cara was involved in the *RWI: Fresh Start* programme. This intervention began for her in Primary 7 although at the time the scheme was new to the authority and teacher expertise in the local authority was still developing, both in terms of delivering the programme and in selecting pupils to participate. Cara had a complex family background. She was known to social work and her family were known to the police. Primary staff had advised that she apply for specialist provision, but this was rejected by her

family. Cara was also keen to attend the same secondary school as her friends. She was judged by her teacher to still be working towards 1st Level by the end of Primary 7 which is behind the expected level of progress for a pupil at her age and stage.

5.5.1 Cara: Yarc Assessment Scores

A YARC was carried out on Cara at the end of P7 (pre) and at the end of S1 (post).

Figure 7. Cara pre-

intervention

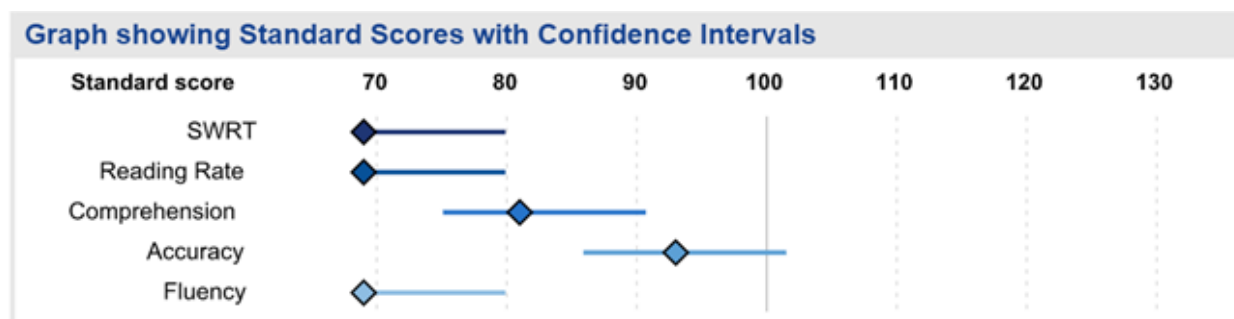
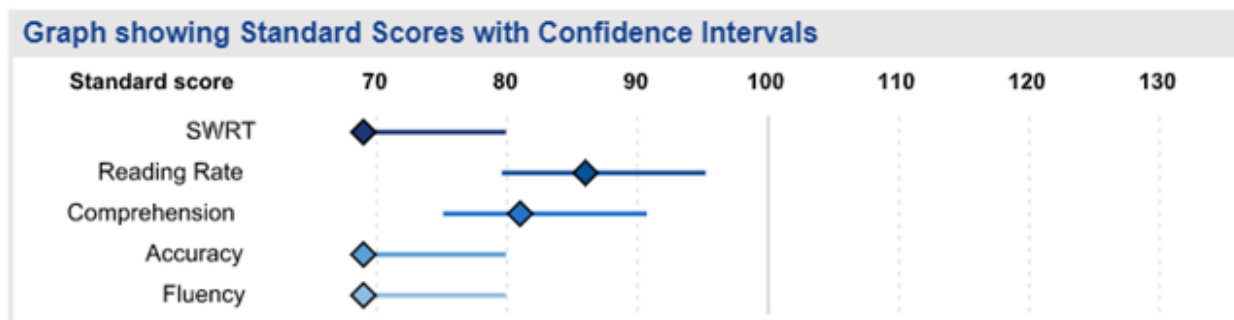


Figure 8. Cara post-intervention



Cara's reading rate improved during the time she spent on the intervention. This can be attributed to the fact that RWI encouraged familiarity with phonemes and focused on improvements in the speed and automaticity of reading. In that respect the programme was successful for Cara. However, there was no impact on her comprehension, and her accuracy, fluency and SWRT score remained comparatively low.

This raised the question of whether the efficacy of an intervention should be measured by drawing on the impact that it has in a real-world setting for the learner. The qualitative data suggested that Cara had not necessarily gained any new skills that she could transfer into other educational settings. Therefore, she gained no greater understanding of the material she read than she did pre-intervention. However, we can see from Cara's response to the interview questions discussed in chapter four, that the intervention supported progress in areas such as her level of confidence, her engagement in class and has had a positive impact on her identity as a reader and as a learner more generally.

5.5.2 Key Themes Emerging from Cara's Interview

This section discusses the qualitative data that was collected from Cara, a participant in the *Read Write Inc: Fresh Start* intervention. The data is analysed across the three emergent themes; power, access and belonging.

5.5.3 Power

Cara was the only *RWI: Fresh Start* participant to address Power Over Institution. She addressed this in the exchange below by discussing being extracted from her friends' classes to take part in *RWI: Fresh Start*:

PDM: Are you in their classes in other subjects outside of English?

Cara: Nope.

PDM: I remember how annoyed you were about that and to be fair you've really taken it in your stride.

Cara: It still hurts me because I hardly talk to anyone in my class. The teacher promised us we would be in the same class, but it hasn't happened.

Cara clearly felt a sense of helplessness around her removal from class. It upset and annoyed her, restricted her access to a valuable and supportive peer group and yet, in her eyes, there was nothing she could do to rectify this. This idea is further developed in the interview when she responded with “probably best whatever the teachers decide” when asked about how she felt she would perform elsewhere.

Cara’s responses highlighted the importance of having a level of Power Over Curriculum and the agency to affect the content of the material you read.

PDM: Next thing then is to think about do you read more after being involved in *RWI* or do you read less or is it just the same? What impact has it had on your reading habits?

Cara: So, I like reading but if I like a book, I like it and I’ll get stuck into it but if it’s about something I’m not really keen on I don’t really read it and I don’t take an interest.

Cara’s response indicated that motivation was a crucial factor in her participation in reading activities in class.

Cara readily identified Power Over Progress as an important consideration in her interview responses. She recognised the benefits that came from participation in the intervention and linked it to the progress she felt she had made. Cara explained that the programme had given her greater confidence when approaching unfamiliar words:

PDM: And what about now after having done it in here for a year. How do you feel about yourself now?

Cara: I don’t know. It’s like there are certain words I get stuck with but the words I’ve seen before I’m ok and I know them.

Cara displayed a level of confidence about her reading that wasn't there before the intervention. Interestingly, her reference to familiarity with words she has seen before indicated that her confidence stemmed from increased experience of text.

5.5.4 Access

Access to Texts was spoken of once by Cara. She conveyed her desire to be able to possess and consume any texts she could find.

PDM: What kind of books did you read?

Cara: Any books I could find.

Cara's desire to access reading material emphasises the importance of access within school and the home literacy environment.

Access to Valued Domains was also important for Cara and the following responses were gathered in relation to interview questions which focused on reading as a skill and whether she could see an impact in other areas of learning and in her wider life:

PDM: Do you think being involved in RWI has made you better at reading in other subjects?

Cara: Definitely.

PDM: And that's why you felt confident enough to offer to read in Home Ec?

Cara: Yeah. Because if I wasn't in RWI and I was still stuck like I was at primary I don't think I could do it.

Cara's response provided an insight into her motivations and revealed how her identity as a reader had restricted her access to valued domains.

The importance of access was again shown through responses that placed importance on Access to Conversations. Cara's response related to interview questions enquiring about participants' practices around discussing texts and the type of conversations they engage in. She placed importance on being able to engage with the teacher and receive help when needed:

PDM: So, what does that mean to you? If you're saying "I was in RWI" what does that mean to you?

Cara: It just means I get extra help than the other people need. Because the teacher had us in a wee table and she would get us onto a task, then deal with the rest of the class and then come back to us. But I liked it.

Cara identified her place as a participant in *RWI: Fresh Start* as a mark of her performance in reading. However, she did not see this as negative and stated that she valued the increased level of teacher interaction the small group offered.

5.5.5 Belonging

Responses from Cara related to Belonging to Institution were limited but significant, again demonstrating the importance of this theme. The response below relates to questions on the intervention's impact on her feelings towards school.

PDM: Right ok. What about now? How do you feel about doing those assessments and your experience as a reader in school? If someone new came into class and asked you to read aloud, how would you feel?

Cara: I don't know. I could say yes but with the words I'm stuck at I just skip. I asked the teacher if I could read something out in Home. Ec but there was a word I was stuck at and I left it out and it still sounded the way it should.

Cara demonstrated a new-found level of confidence in this exchange. She again associated the intervention with improved positivity about her reading.

Belonging to Peer Groups also featured strongly in Cara's responses. In the exchange below her insights demonstrated her desire to fit in and how improvement in reading has supported that.

PDM: Last question. Can you tell me any areas outside of school where you've been successful as a reader? Any aspect of your life where improving as a reader has been a good thing?

Pupil C: So, on Instagram posts. In P7 I could hardly read any of it but now I can. Same with signs and posters. I can read them now.

Cara recognised the social benefits of reading and the way that her ability to contribute to her peer group and engage in discussions with them in ways that she values improved her life outside of school.

5.6 Case Study Four: Daniel

Daniel was involved in the RWI programme from the beginning of S1. He was extracted from class for additional literacy support from Primary 3 onwards and was diagnosed with dyslexia towards the end of Primary 5. Daniel's parents were supportive of him and encouraged him to do well. They attended parents' evenings and demonstrated an interest in his transition programme. They were also supportive of the steps taken by the school to improve his reading. Daniel had an older brother and sister who achieved academic success. He was motivated to do well in school. He performed well in

other areas of the curriculum and viewed improvement in reading as a gateway to improving his performance in other subjects. Teacher judgement assessed him as working at 1st Level at the end of Primary 7.

5.6.1 Daniel: YARC Assessment Scores

A YARC was carried out on Daniel at the end of P7 (pre) and at the end of S1 (post). In this case the initial YARC assessment was carried out by Primary colleagues who used a version of the test that was more suited to pupils aged under 11. They felt Daniel would not be able to cope with the test typically used in the authority for pupils in late primary/ early secondary due to his reading performance in class and his dyslexia diagnosis. For this reason, there is no assessment of single word reading in the initial YARC. A valid comparison can still be made as the assessments are standardised.

Figure 9. Daniel pre-intervention

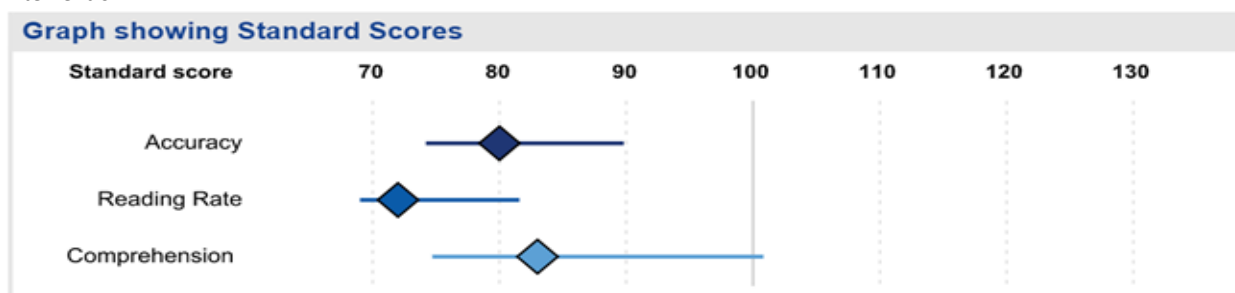
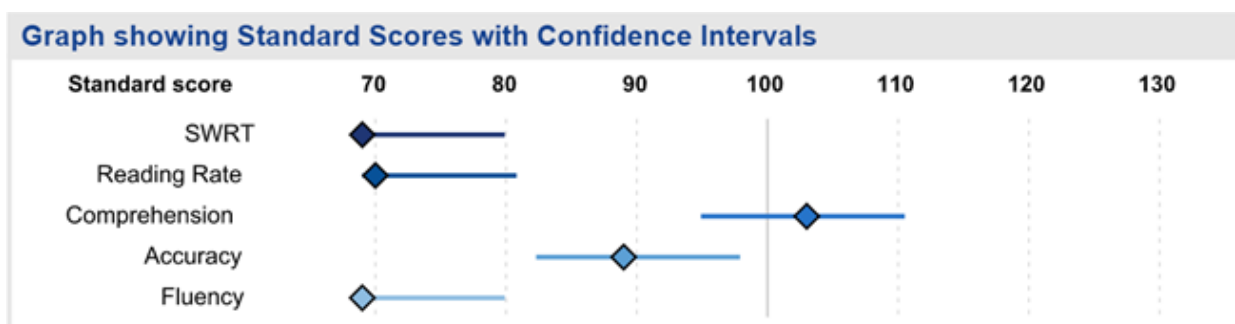


Figure 10. Daniel post-intervention



Daniel's dyslexia had an impact on his performance in certain aspects of reading. As such there

was little change in Reading Rate. Daniel will always need more time than his peers to read a passage. His reading became more accurate, perhaps because of the reinforcement of phonics, although it was still behind that of his peers. Given that this situation will persist for Daniel throughout his school career, and in his life after school, it raised important questions about the purpose of ranking children and judging them against each other.

As previously mentioned, the real improvement to note was present in Daniel's comprehension which climbed significantly in his first year at secondary school. He was the only member of the *RWI: Fresh Start* cohort who participated in this study who witnessed improvement in this area. It was possible that Daniel benefited from a different approach in Secondary and gained in confidence as a result. *RWI: Fresh Start* aside, he was mainstream in all his classes and was treated the same as all other pupils. Teachers mostly gave him extra time for reading tasks. He was also encouraged to tackle books that he was interested in regardless of the level. Exposure to high-interest texts with a higher level of difficulty has allowed him to show greater understanding than was the case at primary. It was possible that his dyslexia diagnosis had resulted in teachers labelling him and perhaps having lower expectations of his abilities.

5.6.2 Key Themes Emerging from Daniel's Interview

This section discusses the qualitative data collected from Daniel, giving voice to his views on the *Read Write Inc: Fresh Start* intervention. The data generated from Daniel's interviews is analysed across the three emergent themes; power, access and belonging.

5.6.3 Power

Like Cara, Daniel's responses highlighted the importance of having a level of Power Over Curriculum. He provided the following response related to this theme when asked about the type of reading he is asked to do in other subject areas and how it impacts on his school experience:

PDM: Here's another question that's a bit off topic – have you ever picked up a demerit for not doing your science homework?

Daniel: Yeah.

PDM: Do those demerits come regularly?

Daniel: Just really when it's that type of homework.

Despite having a well-documented reading difficulty, shared in advance with his teachers, Daniel was expected to complete the same reading as his peers for homework and was punished for being unable to do so. This highlighted for him the fact that he possessed little agency when it came to influencing his work in school.

In terms of Power Over Progress, Daniel equated the intervention with improved ability to access texts accurately.

PDM: So, tell me what that looks like. How do you know that you're getting better in other subjects.

Daniel: I'm just able to read bigger words and able to recognise them.

He recognised the improvement in his reading and the support it gave him in other areas of the curriculum.

5.6.4 Access

When discussing Access to Texts, Daniel commented on the fact that he wanted to read texts but was sometimes put off by various factors:

PDM: What kind of stuff do you watch on TV?

Daniel: Like, The Hunger Games and things like that.

PDM: And does that ever make you feel like you want to read those books?

Daniel: Yeah.

PDM: And have you done that?

Daniel: No not really?

PDM: What do you think is stopping you?

Daniel: The length of them. The length of all the books.

It is interesting that despite the self-identified improvement in Daniel's reading, he was still reluctant to tackle certain texts.

Daniel provided the following response when discussing how reading linked to his ability to access valued domains:

PDM: So, see these people that you described as being good readers and you said that they were quick, is there anything else about their reading practices that was different to yours at the time?

Daniel: No, not really.

PDM: So, they were quicker, but did they try to read more difficult books?

Daniel: Yeah.

PDM: So, again, what was your feeling about yourself at that point? How did it make you feel seeing them read books that you may have wanted to read but you were left reading other material?

Daniel: Just wanted to try to get up to their level.

Again, it is notable that Daniel viewed his improvement in reading as a means of accessing domains and practices already occupied and demonstrated by his peers.

When discussing Access to Conversations, Daniel provided the following response, stating that his experience of dialogue around texts was similar to before the intervention:

PDM: When you think about those conversations, would you say that you have them more now than you used to or is it just the same?

Daniel: Just the same really.

In some ways this demonstrated the fact that the act of reading was not as socially positioned for Daniel as it was for some of the other participants.

5.6.5 Belonging

Daniel again found success and a sense of belonging to the institution in being able to identify with his peers and measure up to them in terms of performance:

PDM: Now that we're at the end of RWI how do you feel about it?

Daniel: Good. I think it has made a difference.

PDM: The texts that other people were reading that you mentioned a couple of minutes ago. Do you see yourself picking up those kinds of books in the future?

Daniel: Yeah. I'd like to.

In contrast to Cara, Daniel's responses related to Belonging to Peer Groups suggested that he did not place the same social value on reading:

PDM: How did you feel about taking part? When you were first asked about RWI how did that make you feel?

Pupil D: Like, ok.

PDM: It didn't annoy you that none of your friends were there?

Pupil D: Not really.

When considered alongside previous responses, it was perhaps the case that Daniel's view of reading as a social practice was related to competition and being academically aligned with his peers rather than reading being a social activity in and of itself.

5.7 Summary of Interview Responses and Standardised Assessments from Cara and Daniel (*Read Write Inc: Fresh Start*)

Daniel gave no responses regarding Power over Institution in his interview. This perhaps indicated that he did not view reading as a tool that could give him influence and agency over his school experience. Similarly, Cara conveyed the idea that she did not feel like she had any influence or opinion that mattered in relation to the support she was given. Furthermore, Cara conveyed a sense of

disappointment, and possibly growing distrust, towards the institution. She felt let down that promises have not been fulfilled in relation to her transition to secondary and the pathway she was following in the subject. Cara also expressed her feelings of powerlessness over the texts she studied. This had a clear impact on her attitude to reading and demonstrates the extent to which participation in reading is closely tied to use of high-interest texts, especially among readers we would categorise as “struggling”. The same sense of powerlessness was also evident in her feelings towards tasks she was asked to complete as part of the in-class reading experience. Cara explained she was anxious about reading aloud and being exposed as a struggling reader in front of her peers. Additionally, Daniel’s school experience, learner identity and the way staff perceived him was impacted by his performance in reading. He felt as though he was different from other pupils and judged himself negatively because he did not perform to their level. Ultimately, he seemed to view reading merely as a means of accessing domains he valued, or a task to be completed or mastered, rather than having any value in, and of, itself. This pragmatic and rational approach is understandable given how he witnessed improvements in his reading performance have little impact on his day-to-day life in school.

Both pupils also responded to questions around access. Cara indicated that she felt that she has benefitted from participation in the phonics programme. It is interesting however, that she chose to position that success within disciplinary vocabulary and a new-found familiarity with words she heard in class and not in relation to reading texts. She considers the learning or improvement to be associated with increased knowledge of new subject domains, rather than the skill of reading itself. Similarly, Daniel is measuring his progress not in terms of understanding but in relation to the size of the words he can now read.

Cara also conveyed a real desire to access texts that meant something to her. The combination of Covid-19 lockdown and a poor literacy environment had restricted her access to, and experience of,

texts that she enjoyed. Access to texts through the school library, and through other school and local authority Reading for Pleasure initiatives, was a new source of support that was only now being signposted for her. Daniel's answers did not indicate that he had developed more interest in reading beyond the classroom. He measured his success by his ability to decode more sophisticated words, but he was still put off by lengthy texts.

There was commonality between some of Cara's responses around Access to Valued Domains and her responses around Power Over Curriculum, especially the comment "probably best whatever the teachers decide" which indicated that she was content to accept, and believe in, whatever teachers decided on her behalf, even if she felt isolated or unhappy as a result of those decisions. Her learner identity appears to be rooted in the judgements teachers have made of her. Furthermore, in Daniel's eyes, reading was a tool that could provide access to valued domains and not necessarily a valued domain in and of itself. His opinion of himself as a reader is positioned within what he does with his reading skills as opposed to the skills themselves.

Cara valued the opportunity to engage in dialogue around texts. For her, this was a positive experience and one which helped her to improve. Contrastingly, there was no suggestion that Daniel's home literacy environment encouraged dialogue around texts or viewed reading for pleasure positively. He did not engage in conversations around texts either with parents or siblings which made similar conversations in school difficult. Furthermore, Daniel stated that the level of conversation around texts had remained static throughout his time on the intervention.

Cara felt that extraction for support impacted her learner identity in a negative way. She felt part of the institution when she participated in the same work as her peers. Participation and, by extension, any possible progress in the intervention was dependent on that sense of belonging, something that was only possible if she felt it was something in common with her friends. However, she

did feel an improved sense of Belonging to Peer Groups as the improvements she made in reading enabled her to engage with her friends on Instagram. This is a real-life example of the impact of developing her reading ability and the way that it provides access to social circles of peer groups and connects to social capital. Daniel indicated that he does not relate reading with his friendship group and does not really view it as a social practice. He is less likely to be put off by the fact that he is on his own in the group and was unperturbed by being separated from his friends. However, when it came to his sense of belonging in class, Daniel was able to recognise the difference between himself and his peers. Reading was something that marked him out as different as opposed to bringing him and his friends together.

5.8 Case Study Five: Erin

Erin was involved in the *After School Reading Club* (ASRC) titled Pizza and Pages. As previously mentioned, this was a voluntary intervention that pupils could attend when they felt like doing so. She had an older brother who communicated challenging and distressed behaviour at school and at home. Her parents were supportive of the school's efforts to support their daughter. They engaged well with the primary and continued to do so with secondary staff. Erin was be a quiet pupil and was reluctant to read aloud in class. In primary, Erin was briefly involved in the RWI programme in Primary 7 but was withdrawn as primary staff realised that her levels were beyond that of a pupil who required support in phonics. However, the P7 teacher still felt that there was an issue with Erin's reading that had to be addressed. Erin was judged to be working towards 1st Level at the end of Primary 7.

5.8.1 Erin: YARC Assessment Scores

A YARC was carried out on Erin at the end of P7 (pre) and at the end of S1 (post).

Figure 11. *Erin pre-intervention*

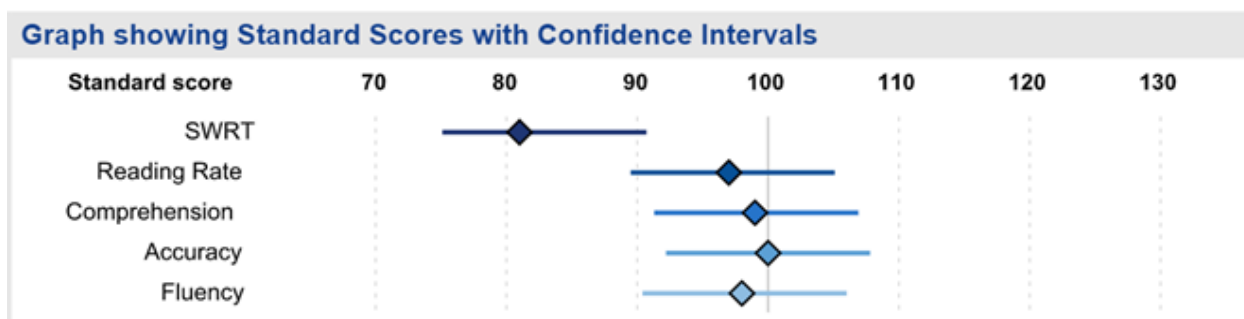
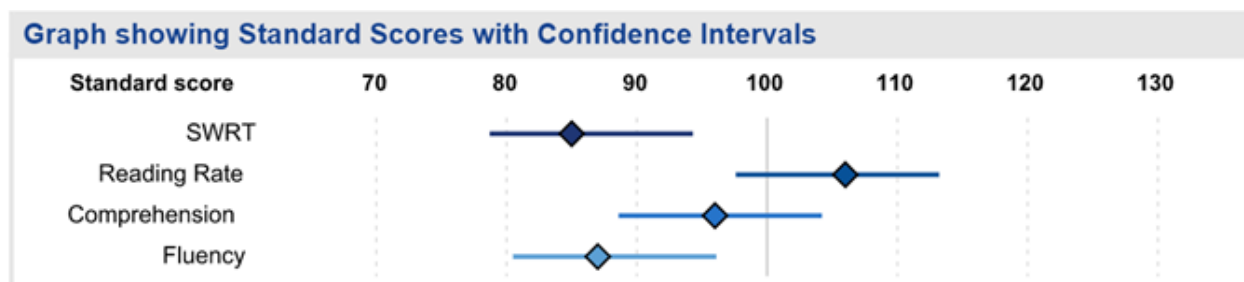


Figure 12. Erin post-intervention



There was improvement in Erin’s reading rate, and she progressed through texts more quickly than before despite the increasing difficulty level of what she read.

Her comprehension remained largely the same, but her fluency declined. This was likely a result of the retest using longer passages and requiring the learner to read to herself. As a result, she did not seem to have benefitted from the reinforcement of seeing and hearing the words she reads which may be the reason why her level of comprehension plateaued.

5.8.2 Key Themes Emerging from Erin’s Interview

This section discusses the qualitative data that was collected from Erin, providing her views on the *After School Reading Club*. The data generated from Erin’s interviews is analysed across the three emergent themes; power, access and belonging.

5.8.3 Power

Erin addressed Power Over Curriculum in the following exchange:

PDM: Right, ok. What do you think it is we were doing that helped you?

Erin: I think it was after you finished reading the book you got a chance to explain what happened. To explain about everything and talk about the book.

In this section of the interview, we can see that Erin noted the differences in her experience in reading between classroom practice in Primary and Secondary, and the intervention.

Erin provided the following observation in relation to Power Over Progress, including her thoughts on how improved performance in reading could empower her within school:

PDM: So being in among better readers was quite motivational.

Erin: Yeah. It made me want to get better at reading and then when I heard about reading club my mum said I should join that.

It is interesting that Erin's mum was a key factor in pushing and encouraging her to take part in the intervention.

5.8.4 Access

Erin explained that having access to texts she is interested in ensures that she is motivated to focus on her reading:

PDM: Ok. I want to try to get an idea of how you felt about yourself as a reader before we started and how you felt afterwards. I guess what I'm thinking about is would you say you were good, not great, just ok and what is maybe different now?

Erin: Every time I read a book before I would always get distracted but in reading club it is always nice and quiet. Now I'd say I'm better because I don't get distracted a lot because I have good books.

It is also interesting to note that for Erin, the idea of access to texts was intertwined with the suitability of the reading environment, and both factors contributed to her increased desire to read.

Erin explained that she valued reading because she could access cultural domains that she enjoyed and wanted to know more about:

PDM: Ok. Can I touch on that again? Tell me a bit more about "good books"?

Erin: So, like, they have ... the books they give you. I don't know how to explain it.

PDM: So, one of the things about Reading Club is that we ask you what you want to read and then we go and buy it so was that helpful?

Erin: Yeah. Because I wanted to get a book on Riverdale before and I got that. And I'm reading that now actually.

This again emphasises the importance of social situations in motivating children to read and be able to contribute to discussions with their peers on areas of culture that interest them.

Erin also linked Access to Conversations with the social side of reading. She expressed this idea in the extract below:

PDM: that's good. That's your identity as a reader and feeling confident to talk to those older girls about what they're reading and taking an influence from them and seeing out new stuff. That really is a success outside of school.

PDM: Do you think that has improved again since you've been involved in Reading Club?

Pupil E: Yeah, I would say I do it more often and I feel confident talking about books with older friends.

5.8.5 Belonging

Erin expressed a sense of belonging to peer groups within a social context outside of school and made it clear that the opportunity to talk about texts supported those relationships with her peers.

PDM: Last question then. Can you think of any areas outside of school where you were successful as a reader?

Pupil E: Probably at Guides.

PDM: Tell me about that then.

Pupil E: Well, they were all older than me and some of them bring books in and I thought they looked good. So, they told me about it and when I go to bookshops now, I'm looking at what they showed me.

5.9 Case Study Six: Fern

Fern was involved in the *After School Reading Club*. She was confirmed to be dyslexic at the beginning of Primary 4 and by her own admission had a difficult time with reading at primary school. The initial YARC was carried out by primary staff at the end of P7 and a test appropriate for lower primary was used. Subsequently, I did not think there was value in subjecting Fern to further testing

when a set of comparable, standardised scores were available. This explains why there are no confidence scores and no initial score for SWRT or fluency like there are for other participants. Fern is from a supportive background and performs well in other areas of learning. In person, Fern was extremely enthusiastic and engaging. She was a confident girl who was desperate to improve and demonstrated real resilience in trying to become a “better” reader. There were low expectations of what she could achieve. Her experience of reading had mainly been one of failure and being extracted from class for support. Fern was judged as working towards 1st Level at the end of Primary 7.

5.9.1 Fern: YARC Assessment Scores

A YARC was carried out on Fern at the end of P7 (pre) and at the end of S1 (post).

Figure 13. Fern pre-intervention

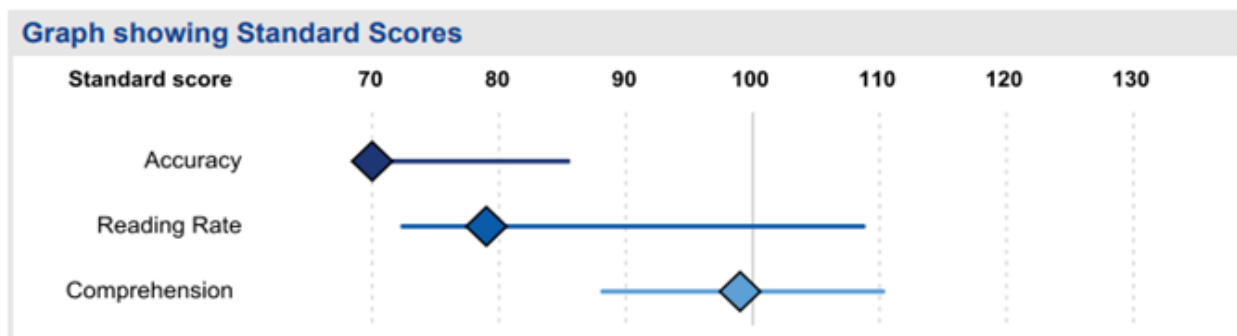
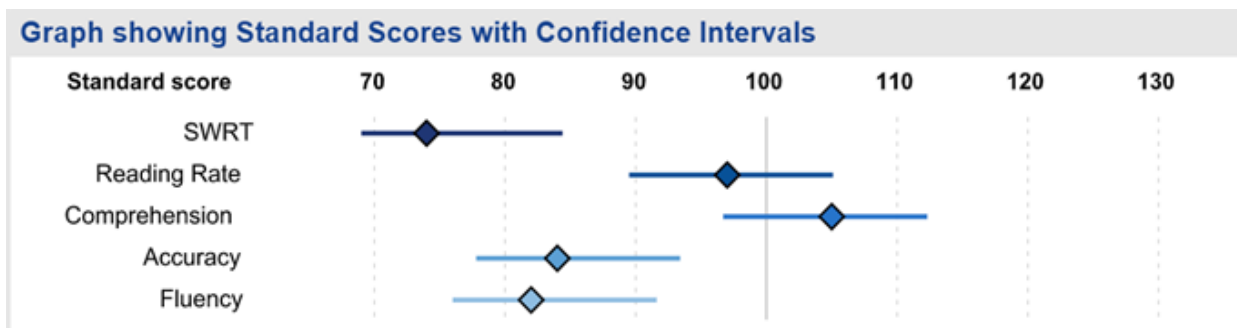


Figure 14. Fern post-intervention



Fern said that she felt that taking her time and not trying to meet her own expectations of pace left her with a better understanding of the passage.

The dyslexia diagnosis meant that Fern's Reading Rate and Fluency were always going to be lower than her peers, but her comprehension was impressively high and was beyond what was expected from a pupil her age.

5.9.2 Key Themes Emerging from Fern's Interview

This section discusses the qualitative data collected from Fern regarding the *After School Reading Club*. As before, the data generated from Fern's interviews is analysed across the three emergent themes; power, access and belonging.

5.9.3 Power

Fern discussed Power Over Institution several times in her interviews, including in the exchange below.

PDM: Ok. So, before we did this, before you were involved in the after school, reading club, how did you feel about yourself? How would you describe yourself as a reader?

Fern: (laughs) Oh terrible! Hated reading. Hated anything to do with reading. Any time I got a book at school I hated it.

From Fern's perspective, reading aloud was an activity she did not enjoy yet it was a frequent activity in class despite the fact she struggled with it.

One example of how Fern understood Power Over Curriculum in her interviews is presented below:

Fern: In Primary 7 I got my test done which made me realise I'm not a bad reader. It's just something that I can't read like everybody else if you know what I mean? Got to S1

and realised I can read what I want – it just takes me a bit of time. I just couldn't read big books, so I thought I was bad.

Fern focused on the fact that where she had previously been labelled a “struggling” reader, the YARC test meant she now had clarification that this was not the case. She valued the freedom in the intervention to read texts of her choosing. She also recognised that the environment created in the intervention helped remove the feelings of inadequacy she felt when asked to read in class.

Fern observed that she had limited power over progress and found herself in lower ability groupings because of how she presented as a reader:

PDM: So, here's a question. How do you know what kind of reader you are?

Fern: I don't know.

PDM: You've probably actually touched on this already but how did you know back in primary?

Fern: Because when I was in Primary 3, I used to be in the high groups and then we started realising that I was reading differently from everybody else. My reading out loud and reading in my head and my comprehension just wasn't the same as everyone else. My reading aloud was all the way down there (low) but by comprehension was all the way up there (high). So, I was put into a low group which made me think I was a bad reader.

There was a frustration that could be detected in Fern's contribution on this theme. She felt that she had been unduly judged on her reading performance, and it had a negative impact on how she viewed herself as a reader.

5.9.4 Access

When discussing Access to Texts, Fern conveyed a sense of pride in the fact that her book collection had grown and that she engaged with a wider variety of texts:

PDM: Ok, cool. And then I guess I just want to say, like since you've become involved in the *After School Reading Club*, have you bought more books?

Fern: I now have a bookshelf. (Pupil's tone expressed their happiness/ satisfaction with this.)

PDM: What kind of books do you pick up? What sort of stuff do you like?

Fern: Well, I have a lot of like Disney ones. I've got two crime ones, loads of fictional ones, I have one on history – I quite like history – and I have one on saving the planet.

The collection of books she had helped her to feel positive about reading and was symbolic of her progress.

When discussing Access to Valued Domains, Fern expressed her satisfaction at the fact that she knew improvement as a reader would serve her well in the English classroom and beyond. She also made the connection between improving as a reader and attaining success in exams:

PDM: Here's a question. You've obviously improved. Do you think it is important to continue to improve?

Fern: Definitely. Because my English teacher keeps on talking about how in 2 years we have Nat 5s and its reading comprehension and its reading a paragraph and rewriting it and I'm like, I'm going to need to work hard to be able to do all this and be able to get to where I want to be in the future. So, I think I do need to continue to improve my reading.

Again, there was a sense of pride conveyed in Fern's contribution to this theme as she equated progress to National 5 as a mark of her improvement.

Referring to Access to Conversations, Fern conveyed her satisfaction that she could work together with friends to overcome problems, difficulties or challenges in her reading:

Fern: ... so when I was stuck on something, or Sara was stuck on something she could talk us through it which made me want to do it more.

Now that Fern was not excluded from valued reading practices or groups, she could call on her peers for support and benefit from the opportunity to discuss texts with them.

5.9.5 Belonging

Fern addressed the theme of Belonging to Institution in the following extract from her interviews:

PDM: For all the reasons that you said? And how did you that make you feel compared to other people in your class?

Pupil F: I hated it. I felt so different. Even in primary school I used to be not even able to read with the class. I used to be in a group of 5 and we were given the wee thin books.

The rest of the class were reading big thick books and we just felt so out of place and so different. Now I don't feel that way as we are all the same.

It is again interesting to note that Fern's perceived deficit in reading left her feeling detached from the class and made her feel noticeably different to her peers.

Fern also explained that her improvement in reading had an impact on her social experiences beyond school:

PDM: Last question. Can you tell me any areas outside of school where you are successful as a reader? Take learning out of it. Has it been useful socially or from a friendships point of view? Is there something you do now that you didn't before, and the reason is the reading club?

Fern: Well, I've done opera since I was in P6, but I never got a main part because I struggled with reading. But this year I have a main part with lines. I think reading club helped a lot with that to be fair.

PDM: That's brilliant. And you think that was the difference? I guess it's just overall confidence.

Fern: (Agrees)

In a similar vein to responses given by Fern in other areas, she made it clear that improvement in reading, and improvement in her faith in her own ability, offered the possibility of new social experiences.

5.10 Summary of interview responses and standardised assessments from Erin and Fern (*After School Reading Club*)

The interview responses from both Erin and Fern were significant as they demonstrated that learners' feelings towards reading could be tied up in the perceptions others, especially their peers, had of them as readers. If their experience of reading was centred around the anxiety of waiting to be asked to read aloud, a task where they know they will perform more poorly than their peers, then it was likely that they would struggle to develop any positive feelings towards reading. Their interview responses indicated that their self-perceived failure in this performative aspect of reading increased the possibility that they would decline opportunities to read for pleasure and fail to develop their comprehension in the same way as their peers. Just as with her responses to Power Over Institution, Erin felt a lack of agency and her negative attitude to reading stemmed from her fear of being asked to read aloud. However, the more comfortable environment created in the ASRC allowed her to develop confidence when both reading aloud and talking about the text. There was also a suggestion that the environment and conditions under which Erin was asked to read in class had an impact on her confidence in her own ability and led her to believe that she was unable to tackle the same texts as the rest of her class. The lack of agency felt by Fern impacted on both her motivation and her confidence as she often found the texts studied in class of little interest and tasks such as reading aloud or reading quickly did not play to her strengths. The ASRC allowed Fern to read texts she had a firm interest in and to do so without pressure of being asked to read aloud or pressure of having to "keep up" with her peers. Finally, both pupils referred to the importance of relationships and the benefits they found in being able to discuss texts. They were positive not only about the staff they worked with but also about their peers, which supported the idea of the importance of feeling part of a community of readers and the importance of being able to draw on the experiences of others who have read and enjoyed the same texts as you. This is discussed by Cremin et al., (2009), who argue that Reading for Pleasure pedagogies,

... encompassed marked improvements in reading environments, read aloud provision, book talk and text recommendations, as well as quality time for independent reading. Such reading practices were frequently constructed and shaped as open-ended opportunities which profiled learner agency and choice, fostering spontaneous 'inside-text talk'. (p. 18)

This is significant in the context of this study as these practices were the foundation of both *Reading Ambassadors* and the *After School Reading Club*. Fern also related how the experience of initially being in more able groups until it became clear that she was not progressing at the same rate as her peers had a direct impact on both her confidence and attitude towards reading. Fern's interview responses highlighted that involvement in the *After School Reading Club* made her realise that there is much more to reading than simply being a fluent or fast reader and she now viewed reading as more than performative and recognised her assets as a reader.

Erin's responses also confirmed that engagement in reading is closely linked to learners being able to access high-interest texts. She could differentiate between the performative aspect of reading in school, which had a negative impact on her, from her experience of reading as a social practice that she experienced at home. The intervention changed how reading was framed for Fern – from a task that made her feel like a failure to a social practice that recognised her skills and valued her interests – and led to a significantly improved attitude towards reading. Her comments demonstrated that reading had become an important part of her life and her renewed engagement with texts has benefitted from a cumulative effect, with interest building through each text she reads. Furthermore, the low stakes approach taken in the *After School Reading Club* created the conditions for her to improve. Access to Valued Domains was a factor for both pupils and for Fern especially, there was a level of anxiety attached to her perception that reading would be a determining factor in exam success. Her motivation

to improve and to access valued domains came from the negative impact on learner identity she experienced in primary where she was extracted for support and placed in lower ability groups on account of being less fluent than her peers. Both learners also valued the access the intervention provided to high quality conversations. Erin placed value on the support she gained from being part of a community of readers and being able to tap into the experiences of her peers. Furthermore, Fern's comments demonstrated the fact that reading now had a purpose that played to her strengths, which meant she found a new level of enthusiasm for the task.

Erin valued her interactions with the staff who supported the intervention. She felt that they were invaluable in encouraging her to try to continue to improve as a reader and to tackle texts she found challenging. These contributions demonstrated that her sense of belonging was impacted by the way her performance in reading was evaluated by her teacher, her peers and herself. She felt unable to keep pace and picked up on the differences between her and her peers. Extraction from class for support had a negative impact on her sense of belonging. In her eyes, the improvements she made in reading due to the intervention have given her the confidence to engage in discussions and interact with peer groups she values. For Fern, the greater sense of Belonging to Peer Groups fostered through participation in the intervention increased dialogue around texts at home. Those increased opportunities for discussion supported the development of comprehension and, in turn, sparked interest in new, more challenging texts. She attributed this greater confidence and sense of BtPG to the support given through the intervention.

Erin and Fern had very different profiles before the intervention. Erin was just about on track in all areas of reading except for performance in reading rate. Erin has seen improvement in Reading rate but has also seen no progress in comprehension and a dip in performance in fluency. Fern improved performance in all areas of reading measured by the YARC. Reading rate has improved, and they now outperform expected levels in comprehension.

5.11 Chapter Summary

This chapter opened by discussing the data and participants in the context of the school and local authority in which the study took place. It then presented qualitative and quantitative data for each participant in individual case studies, giving voice to their feelings towards and experiences in the interventions they accessed. It also tracks changes to their attainment in reading and relates the findings from all datasets to key themes; power, access and belonging.

Chapter Six: Attitudes and Attainment: Discussion

6.0 Chapter Overview

This chapter is written in three parts. The first section contains a discussion of the interview responses generated from semi-structured interviews held with participants before and after the intervention.

Section two contains a discussion around participants' performance in standardised reading assessments before and after the interventions. Finally, this chapter summarises both datasets before considering whether the data has successfully addressed the research questions.

6.1 Discussion of Interview Responses

In answering the research question; 'What were the experiences of struggling and reluctant readers at transition of three interventions, particularly in relation to the dimensions of the three-domains model, namely: a) cognitive knowledge and skills, b) identity and agency, and c) social and cultural capital', the qualitative data gathered for this study surfaced three central messages regarding the participants - Andrew, Bree, Cara, Daniel, Erin and Fern's - priorities around reading and transition, namely power, access and belonging.

Firstly, in relation to power, children appeared to value choice and their attitude to texts can be dependent on their ability to influence what they read or indeed learn. Secondly, attitudes to reading can be influenced by the selection of reading material but also by what children are asked to do with their knowledge after reading. The children in this study placed importance in having access to high interest texts and high-quality dialogue around the texts they read. However, for some children, notably Andrew and Bree, the lack of interest they have in the content of their assigned reading material can reduce their motivation to read. Additionally, the requirement to read aloud, or to complete a series of written tasks after reading, can negatively impact on their motivation to read and their enjoyment of reading. This links to the discussion around the Three Domain Model in chapter 2.3 as if the texts chosen

by teachers do not speak to or reflect a child's cultural and social capital, or their personal and social identity, then the likely disengagement from reading results in less experience of text and subsequently less opportunity to improve their cognitive knowledge and skills. Finally, while children place value on feeling a sense of belonging to the peer groups or institution that they aspire to be part of, they also value a sense of belonging being fostered by the reading material itself. It is important that children see themselves, their families and their communities reflected in the texts they read. It is also important to note the interconnectedness of these themes. For example, learners such as Cara highlighted that a lack of agency or choice in learning impacted on their sense of belonging, which, in turn, impacted on their desire to seek and value high-quality, text-centred conversations with peers or adults.

These responses link closely with the theoretical framework established in chapter two and the literature review presented in chapter three. The lack of power described by participants links to the assertions made by Hall (2010) who argues that children who find reading difficult are unlikely to seek support from their teachers due to the stigma attached to being labelled as a poor reader. This highlights the impact of positioning readers as "struggling" or "reluctant" as problematic, as the labels themselves may lead to those children being reticent to seek the help they need to shed them. Furthermore, the references Bree made to being motivated to read texts that interest them and where they can see their lives presented positively is supported by Jones (2013), and the argument that children seek belonging not only in the institution they attend and their peer groups, but also in the texts they read.

The responses provided also relate to discussion from chapter 3.2 around the Simple View of Reading (Hoover & Gough, 1990), the social turn in literacy (Gee, 1990; Street, 1994), and the Three Domains Tool (Ellis & Smith, 2017). Cara and Daniel who participated in *Read Write Inc: Fresh Start* experienced an intervention largely rooted in the approach advocated by the Simple View of Reading.

Their focus was on improving their technical skills and improving performance in phonics. However, little account was taken of the impact on Cara and Daniel's sense of belonging when they found themselves removed from their regular class. Additionally, while there may have been progression within the programme and improvement in technical skills, there was an absence of any effort to ensure that they used their skills to read for pleasure or to sustain reading beyond school (Clark & Rumbold, 2006). While there was no explicit or direct focus on technical skills, Andrew, Bree, Erin and Fern, who participated in *Reading Ambassadors* and in the *After School Reading Club*, had the freedom to choose the texts they wanted to read, free from the requirements of class-based teaching or a range of tasks that had to be completed (Nell, 1988). Furthermore, they also gained increased experience of print (Cunningham & Stanovich, 1997) which is a crucial factor in developing vocabulary, accumulating knowledge, and developing new forms of cultural and social capital. The Three Domains Tool (Ellis & Smith, 2017) provides guidance on adopting a more rounded approach. It advocates parity of esteem between cognitive knowledge and skills, identity and agency, and cultural and social capital and giving due consideration to the development of each domain as required. It also encourages teachers to note where children require support and to address development needs in a child-centred way. Importantly, the Three Domains can be treated as more than separate entities. They interlock and progress within each domain facilitates progress in the others. For example, progress in the cognitive knowledge and skills domain can support access to valued cultural and social capital. An example of this is Cara's view that *RWI: Fresh Start* gave her the tools to feel able to read aloud in Home Economics. Similarly, Fern stated that her improved view of herself as a reader, from participation in the *After School Reading Club*, has helped her to engage with text more readily and to improve her cognitive knowledge and skills.

In the three sub-sections that follow. I will discuss how these three themes – power, access, and belonging - can inform teachers' understanding of what makes an effective transition, and subsequently

the steps we can take to ensure children's cognitive knowledge and skills, identity and agency, and cultural and social capital are given parity of esteem at the point of transition to secondary school.

6.1.1 The Importance of Choice and Agency in Children's Learning

In both *Reading Ambassadors* and the *After School Reading Club*, Andrew, Bree, Erin, and Fern had control over the texts they read. They were given a free choice of text and encouraged to pursue topics they found interesting or that they already had some knowledge of. This placed value on their cultural and social capital and links to the key theme of power. In *RWI: Fresh Start*, Cara and Daniel's access to texts was restricted to material appropriate to their level within the programme. Choice was not an integral part of the intervention, although they may have had access to independently chosen texts through regular access to the school library or local library.

Yarrosz and Barnett (2001) emphasise the importance of alignment between children's lives in their homes and communities and their school experience. Returning to the five stories of literacy presented in chapter one, particularly Matthew's story, the social, cultural and economic capital children can draw on influences the level of success with which they negotiate that transition. This is particularly important as, by the point of reaching secondary school, young people may more keenly feel a sense of their own identity and in terms of choice in reading, are likely to wish to engage with material they feel reflects their own lives and interests. As mentioned in chapter 3.4, this is supported by Jones (2013) who argues that "that identity work is always already engaged in reading texts and that pedagogical decisions need to include considerations of power and identity" (p. 217). Jones' reference to "power and identity" helps to confirm the importance of children having agency and input in the texts they read, as well as the importance of seeing their lives and communities – their cultural and social capital – validated by being represented in their in-school reading material. This is supported by the Centre for Literacy in

Primary Education (CLPE) report “Reflecting Realities” (2020) which pointed to the absence of representation in children’s literature.

6.1.2 Access to High-Quality, Text-Centred Dialogue

Reading Ambassadors and the *After School Reading Club* are both built around providing children with the opportunity to engage in rich dialogue with peers or adults around texts of their choice. The children’s responses show that this is a valued aspect of both interventions. These conversations help build comprehension (Chambers, 1993) and enthusiasm for the texts they are reading. Conversely, for children accessing *RWI: Fresh start*, while there is undoubtedly a strong relationship and level of involvement with the teacher, this intervention is very much programme and teacher-led, and any dialogue is focused on the resource. This is significant because, as referenced earlier in this discussion, it is important that children can build on the experiences of others through being participants in a community of readers (Cremin et al., 2009) and the nature of the *RWI: Fresh Start* intervention did not directly support this aspect of literacy development in this context.

Luke (2004) suggests that “English itself has become a global form of capital, necessary for entry into stratified regional and local economic and social fields” (p. 269). His reference to “stratified” fields recognises that a learner who demonstrates proficiency and ongoing improvement in English can access valued educational, social and economic domains. In examining the different opportunities provided to children by the interventions we can see that each of them supports ongoing improvement, but they do so in different ways. *RWI: Fresh Start* supports children to become proficient in phonics by focusing on the technical skills required to encode and decode the English language. While this approach is important and supports the ongoing development of children’s technical skills, it does not necessarily develop their ability to use these skills in a social setting, perhaps negating the value of that improvement. Contrastingly, *Reading Ambassadors* and the *After School Reading Club* do not directly

improve technical skills but provide increased experience with text as part of broader, varied social practices. Furthermore, they also provide access to conversations that support comprehension and foster their enthusiasm for reading. Therefore, these interventions increase access to desirable social and educational contexts, but also, potentially, to desirable economic domains as they can support children to gain qualifications which can be used to achieve improved outcomes later in life. When considering the children involved in this study, the opportunity afforded to Andrew, Bree, Erin, and Fern to experience texts in a low-stakes environment was important in enabling them to identify themselves as successful readers. This links closely to Bourdieu's concept of field discussed in chapter two. In this case the intervention has created an opportunity for the child to succeed by adapting the typical classroom practice, or field, to value their cultural and social capital and accommodate the learner's preferred practices. Instead of the high-stakes scenario of reading aloud in front of the class, the learner can read to a small, supportive group. In turn, their responses to interview questions indicate an increased desire to engage in reading and discussion of texts in class, meaning there is greater potential for them to outperform their SIMD category or their class status and access more highly valued social, educational and economic domains. This is the definition of closing the poverty related attainment gap – a priority of the Scottish Government.

Furthermore, Janks (2004) relates proficiency in English to the concept of the "access paradox" and the fact that the more success we have in supporting the development of literacy, the more the marginalisation of those who do not have access to valued social, economic and educational domains becomes ever stronger. The interventions that have been studied are part of that paradox; for those children for whom the intervention was successful, their level of access to valued domains is increased through improved performance in English and other curricular areas, improved social interactions and their eventual exit from the intervention. There is also a positive impact on their sense of belonging, both to the institution and their peer groups, and greater feelings of empowerment and agency. For

those for whom it is unsuccessful, access becomes more difficult. They remain unable to access curriculum areas deemed to hold value and, as they remain on the intervention, there is a cumulative negative impact on their learner identity. Their negative feelings towards the subject can become increasingly entrenched and, within the rigid timetabling structure found within this setting, it can be notoriously difficult to move on from low ability groupings, with children sometimes finding that their class has moved on, they have missed content and, from the perspective of belonging, are less integrated into the group than the other children. Returning to Bourdieu's concept of field, this is an example of school policy or practices – in this instance around timetabling and classes – being too rigid to accommodate the learner and to foster a sense of belonging, potentially resulting in entrenched disenchantment with school.

6.1.3 The Importance of Belonging

Each intervention, in its own way, fostered a sense of belonging in children. The aim was to enable learners to feel part of the institution both as a learner and as a member of peer groups. This is where the difference possibly lies between the interventions. *RWI: Fresh Start* seeks to enable children to feel a sense of belonging through improving their knowledge of technical skills and their subsequent ability to decode increasingly complex, subject specific texts. By succeeding in the programme, they stand a better chance of belonging to the institution by assimilating into a dominant form of school-based literacy. However, there is no specific focus on comprehension development, and to facilitate the intervention, children are isolated from their peer groups. This is significant because research from Cremin et al., (2009) demonstrates the benefits that can be found through the adoption of Reading for Pleasure pedagogies, particularly the way they encourage dialogue around texts and the sharing of ideas and opinions. *Reading Ambassadors* and the *After School Reading Club* do not attend to technical skills and cannot claim to support children in the decoding of increasingly complex texts. However, they do

provide increased experience of texts, support the social practices attached to reading, and value the interests of children, enabling them to contribute to engagements with peer groups.

McGeown et al., (2015b) and Mowat (2020) suggest children's levels of motivation and engagement are higher when they feel they are more closely linked to their setting. An institution which recognises what children value, as opposed to imposing a valued system upon them, stands a better chance of fostering that sense of belonging. Goodenow (1993) extends this idea by suggesting that a sense of belonging is created not by simply displaying values such as care, kindness and warmth but by intertwining these values with a genuine regard for learners' experience and, in the case of literacy and reading, home and community-based practices.

Finally, Hanewald (2013), raises engagement with extra-curricular activities as a measure of the feelings of belonging a learner has towards their setting. This increased engagement leads to improvements in attitudes to schoolwork and their peer groups. This can be considered in the context of the *After School Reading Club*, where children attended voluntarily, gained confidence in an area of the curriculum where they were previously either struggling or reluctant to participate, and could then feed that newfound confidence into their everyday lives at school, both in and out of the formal classroom setting.

6.1.4 Summary of evidence from interviews

This section has examined the relationship between the evidence from Andrew, Bree, Cara, Daniel, Erin, and Fern's interviews and the research presented in the theoretical framework in chapter two and the literature review in chapter three. This dataset helps to answer whether the interventions supported development of participants' personal and social identity, and social and cultural capital as

specified by the Strathclyde Three Domains Tool. Learners' perceived improvement in relation to the Three Domains Tool can be found in appendix seven.

The responses given by Andrew, Bree, Cara, Daniel, Erin, and Fern emerged from the interview evidence. The importance of power was addressed by participants on each of the interventions, which connects to the need for self-determination identified by Ball (2013). Additionally, interview responses also related to the theme of access, indicating that there was a desire among participants to be able to engage with texts that are of interest to them, but also to access conversations around those texts, and to use their skill as readers to improve performance in areas of school and life that mattered to them. This aligns with Janks (2004) who emphasises the importance of language proficiency in improving outcomes in children's lives. Finally, teachers' process for transition could benefit from supporting children to feel a sense of belonging to the new institution, through their studies and through relations with their peers. The importance of belonging is acknowledged in interview responses through comments from participants that emphasise the importance of feeling valued and the importance of fitting in. This is supported by Goodenow (1993) and Mowat (2020), who argue that children need to belong to social networks and feel valued by their peers.

In reading instruction, children could benefit from a continuation of any support and children's values and interests could be embedded within the curriculum they access. Schools' processes could therefore include ensuring that data is gathered on children that provides a picture not just of their attainment or their academic profile, but also help teachers to understand what each child is like as a person, noting their likes and dislikes, their strengths and development needs, and their hopes and fears around transition. This links closely with the Three Domain Model which supports and encourages teachers to position progress and achievement as existing in more than just the cognitive knowledge and skills domain. Furthermore, it could be beneficial to support teachers to learn how to interpret

transition data with more nuance and to engage in discussions around how the knowledge they have of pupils can be used to inform their pedagogy as they enter secondary school. This could allow teachers to take a child-centred approach to their pedagogy and plan according to the needs of the child, rather than planning to the needs or requirements of the expected level.

6.2 Discussion of Standardised Assessment Scores

This section will establish a link between the data gathered from children's YARC scores, the theoretical framework presented in chapter two, and the literature referred to in chapter three.

The quantitative data gathered for this study provided some clear messages around transition but also raised questions around the benefits of different types of intervention. Firstly, all interventions, when implemented fully, led to improvements in at least one aspect of reading. This supports the suggestion that for the success of any intervention to be measurable, there must be a high degree of implementation fidelity. Secondly, interventions that position literacy as a social practice can improve children's performance in all areas of reading. Fern's experience of the intervention demonstrates this most clearly as she developed an improved attitude and displayed more confidence, engagement and positivity about herself as a reader. However, she also produced an improved performance in the standardised assessment. It is also important to note that in some cases, certain errors increased for some children in the second test. These areas of reading may have been impacted by Covid-19 lockdown and school closures. It is also possible that the intervention they accessed did not support these areas of reading with sufficient focus to see their scores improve. Finally, while interventions that focus on technical skills can improve performance in a range of aspects, if not all aspects, of reading, children may not experience improvement that leads to positive outcomes such as increased confidence, a more positive reader and learner identity, and greater levels of engagement in class. This is demonstrated by Daniel's experience of the intervention where although there was an improvement in his performance in

the standardised assessment, his attitude to reading was not positively impacted by his time in the intervention.

This dataset helps answer whether the interventions helped develop children's cognitive knowledge and skills, as laid out in the Three Domains Tool. In the sub-sections that follow a discussion takes place on how these findings can inform teachers' understanding of what makes an effective transition, and subsequently the steps we can take to ensure an effective transition.

6.2.1 The importance of implementation fidelity

For each of the interventions, great care was taken to ensure that they were delivered as intended by the design. This helped ensure the most impactful experience possible for the children involved and the validity of the project, as discussed in chapter three. For *Reading Ambassadors* and the *After School Reading Club*, this meant adhering to the Rights of the Reader (Pennac, 2010) and following the structure for conversations about texts laid out by Chambers (1993). Implementation fidelity for *RWI: Fresh Start* was arguably stricter due to the rigorous, structured nature of the programme. As this was a small group intervention, the children were accommodated in a single class at single desks facing the teacher and while their school experience was impacted by Covid-19, their *RWI: Fresh Start* experience was not.

Topping et al (2018) defines implementation fidelity as how closely the implementation of an intervention is carried out in practice in relation to the way it was envisaged by the original design. This is important when determining whether an intervention works as the accuracy of that judgement is dependent on how closely it mirrors the original vision. This is further supported by Topping (2018) whose study of implementation fidelity in relation to the Accelerated Reader intervention emphasises the importance of key aspects of the programme reflecting the original design intention. The reliability of this thesis, discussed in chapter three, and its results, is positioned within strict adherence to their

planned implementation. By adhering to the implementation guidelines for each intervention, it was possible to assess the performance of the children involved and of the efficacy of the interventions themselves.

6.2.2 The impact of interventions that position reading as a social practice

The data gathered from YARC tests completed by pupils accessing *Reading Ambassadors* and the *After School Reading Club* demonstrated that interventions that position reading as a social practice have the potential to improve performance in all areas of reading. This finding is important as (as will be discussed in more detail in the next section) this is not shown to be the case for technical skills focused interventions in this instance.

This finding supports Bourdieu's concepts of social and cultural capital as they apply to reading. Bourdieu (1990) asserts that reading must be viewed as more than a mere cognitive function, otherwise learners who have access to greater pools of resources, and whose cultural capital aligns with what is most valued, will have an advantage in the education system. This is especially important for the children who participated in this study who are placed at the lower end of SIMD.

Bourdieu's position is supported by Luke (2016) who stresses that a reductive definition of reading comprehension as a narrow, cognitive function does not attend to the requirements of children from lower socio-economic backgrounds. This approach risks marginalising children from lower socio-economic backgrounds as they are left behind their peers when reading, as it is defined in their lives and communities, is no longer present in their school lives.

Finally, Moll et al (1992) asserts that it is important to place value upon the resources available in all households that teachers can tap into to enhance classroom practice and pupil experience. This was evident in the four stories of literacy presented in chapter one. However, it can also be seen in the experiences of Andrew, Bree, Cara, Daniel, Erin, and Fern. As mentioned in chapter two, each child has

different home and community-based practices that they draw upon beyond the school gates (Bourdieu, 1986).

In summary, *Reading Ambassadors* and the *ASRC* were able to impact all areas of reading performance because they paid due attention to the assets children brought to the table, and the increased engagement and subsequent increased experience of text, consistent with the application of the Three Domains Tool, supported their development.

6.2.3 Do technical skills alone lead to improved long-term outcomes?

The YARC data yielded some interesting findings regarding *RWI: Fresh Start*. Cara and Daniel demonstrated improvement in performance in reading fluency. This suggests that the programme provides children with the technical skills and therefore the opportunity to improve comprehension through reading fluency as one means to support children to make meaning from written texts. This is supported by Hudson (2005) who equates reading fluency, stemming from proficiency in phonics, to being a key asset possessed by good readers. Contrastingly, Hudson draws the conclusion that a lack of fluency features prominently among poor readers. Furthermore, Cara improved her reading rate, suggesting a greater confidence with reading aloud because of the programme.

The most interesting piece of data from participants of *RWI: Fresh Start* was the fact that one participant, Daniel, also saw an improvement in comprehension. This is an extremely encouraging result, and it suggests that this pupil has benefitted from the programme to the extent that they could now be an engaged reader, with a renewed interest in Reading for Pleasure. However, this is not borne out by his answers in the interview. Despite his apparent success, Daniel still viewed reading as a means to an end and stated that he was still unlikely to read for pleasure. This finding is inconsistent with what we would expect from any cause-effect relationship. Although technical prowess is important and has improved during this intervention, it has not led to Daniel enjoying reading or seeing any value in it

beyond the school setting. This leads us to question whether the improvement he has found is sustainable and what purpose it fulfils when RfP is not then a feature of their lives. This idea is supported by Clark and Rumbold (2006) who contend that engagement with texts for pleasure is more impactful on potential outcomes than SES status and is therefore essential for accessing desirable social, economic and educational circles, as well as ongoing personal development (Clark & Rumbold, 2005).

This also brings us back to the Strathclyde Three Domains tool (Ellis & Smith, 2017) which reinforces the idea that reading cannot be attended to by solely focusing on technical skills and that instruction in this field must also attend to development of cultural capital and personal and social identity. This view of reading interventions is further supported by Ginsberg's (2020) assertion that learners like Daniel who are placed on highly structured programmes, can ultimately view reading as a performative activity as opposed to a pleasurable one, and that view, as well as the technical focus of the interventions themselves, reinforces their feelings of failure.

6.3 Summary of evidence from quantitative data

This section has examined the relationship between the evidence from children's YARC scores, theoretical framework established in chapter two, and the research literature presented in chapter three.

West, Streeter and Young (2010) identify an effective transition as a key factor in future attainment and state that support must be put in place to support struggling or reluctant readers. Children's views from interviews show that any interventions we use to support pupils must be implemented as closely as possible to the intended model to ensure that they will be effective. Additionally, they must also attend to each aspect of reading, namely cognitive knowledge and skills, identity and agency, and social and cultural capital, to support pupil development and ensure sustained, long-term benefits that could more likely be experienced both in and out of school are enjoyed because

of any progress found through the interventions. The quantitative data gathered also tells us that a tension exists between teacher judgement and performance in standardised assessment. While participants such as Andrew, Bree, and Fern were labelled as “struggling” or “reluctant” readers, their performance in the standardised assessment suggested they had strengths in reading in areas such as comprehension. This indicates that while they were entirely capable readers, the way they enacted reading – choices they made regarding how, when and what to read – did not align with dominant forms of reading practices valued by school. Had Andrew, Bree, and Fern’s performance in reading been viewed through the lens of the Three Domain Tool, and their interests been reflected in the material they read in class, it is possible that the assets they possessed as readers would have been more valued.

6.4 Chapter Summary

This chapter discussed the interview responses generated from semi-structured interviews held with Andrew, Bree, Cara, Daniel, Erin, and Fern before and after the intervention. It also discussed their performances in standardised reading assessments before and after the interventions, using this dataset to answer. Finally, this chapter summarised both datasets before demonstrating how the data addressed the research questions.

The qualitative data discussed in the first half of this chapter demonstrated the varying attitudes towards reading held by participants and the relationship between that attitude and the intervention they accessed. It also relayed the concerns that young people who were part of this study had around the transition to secondary. There is a strong desire to make progress and to avoid being outside of expected age-related progress. However, equally strong feelings exist around the social impact of being a successful reader and the challenges and benefits associated with performance in reading. Additionally, while the children in this study possess the desire to improve, their efforts to do so come against a backdrop of social and economic inequalities. For some children this becomes a struggle, as

they are acutely aware that their proficiency in reading is not at the expected level. For others it creates a reluctance to read, as they do not see themselves, their families or their communities represented or valued in the texts and practices that are valued by their school.

The quantitative data discussed in this chapter demonstrated that no single intervention had a more profound impact on attainment than either of the others but that they each attended to different components of reading and reading development. The *Reading Ambassadors* participants, who started the intervention with a YARC performance that was beyond what was expected of them in terms of the standardised score and reading age, generally maintained their high level of performance in all areas of reading. The pupils who accessed RWI both improved the accuracy of their reading. Pupils E and F, who participated in the *After School Reading Club*, have shown improvement in their reading rate.

Chapter seven will discuss the links between qualitative and quantitative data, the conclusions that can be drawn from the data generated by both aspects of this study and make recommendations for practice and for future study.

Chapter Seven: Conclusion and Recommendations

7.0 Chapter Overview

This chapter provides a review of the thesis and a summary of the findings. Throughout this section links are made to Bourdieu's theory of cultural and social capital discussed and the Three Domains Tool discussed in chapter two, with consideration given to the how both theories influenced the interventions and the recommendations that can be made based on children's experiences of them. This chapter also contains a summary of the contribution this study has made to research around reading, namely in how teachers can support struggling and reluctant readers, and to Primary/Secondary transition. The chapter concludes with recommendations for future research.

7.1 Project Summary

This project began during my time as Principal Teacher of Literacy and Transition in a secondary school in the central belt of Scotland. Before being formally appointed, I was given additional non-contact time to develop the school's approach to transition. This Principal Teacher post was financed through the school's use of the pupil equity fund with a largely self-determined remit and Primary/Secondary transition soon became the dominant feature of the role. The experience I had gained working in transition and the areas for improvement that the cluster had identified meant that we were uniquely placed to address issues around literacy and transition, data-gathering, and sharing of information that existed for children across the cluster when transferring to secondary school. The research was conducted in the secondary school I worked in, with the support of our five associated primaries. It examined children's experience and progress in three separate reading interventions; *Reading Ambassadors*, *RWI: Fresh Start*; and the *After School Reading Club*. The process for analysing qualitative data focused on emerging themes and codes. Quantitative data was analysed to look for patterns of improvement, regression and commonality.

On reviewing the process for transition, and the position of literacy within that process, I identified gaps in the information we gather related to literacy, the actions taken to align with the information, and in our understanding of the impact this had on learners. I also recognised that there was a gap in literature on this topic with little evidence of research into how we support older readers at the point of transition to secondary school.

Literacy, along with numeracy and health and wellbeing, is one of three central pillars of Scottish education, with the Curriculum for Excellence Principles and Practice document positioning it as being of “personal, social and economic importance” (Scottish Government, 2010). Furthermore, supporting school staff at all levels to embed “progression in skills for life, learning and work” is a core aim of How Good is Our School 4 (HGIOS4) and points towards the need for an effective transition as the age range of 3-18 spans early years, primary and secondary. Within the policy landscape described, this doctorate sought to explore how to support learners labelled as “struggling” or “reluctant” readers at transition by addressing the following question:

What were the experiences of struggling and reluctant readers at transition of three interventions, particularly in relation to the dimensions of the three-domains model (Ellis & Smith, 2017), namely: a) Cognitive knowledge and skills, b) identity and agency, and c) social and cultural capital?

Initially, this study focused on a mixed methods approach. This approach was considered suitable as it allowed the research to mix both quantitative and qualitative datasets gathered over the study and ensured that, as well as providing reliable and robust data that could be valued by school leaders and policy makers at local authority level, the views of children who accessed the interventions would also be foregrounded and became an informative and rich dataset from which to understand their experiences. Qualitative data was gathered through semi-structured interviews with all participants. While Andrew and Bree were able to engage with interviews pre and post intervention, the

school closures resulting from the Covid-19 pandemic meant that Cara, Daniel, Erin and Fern engaged with a single interview which reflected on their experiences pre and post intervention. Quantitative data measuring progress in reading was gathered using the York Assessment of Reading Comprehension (YARC). The assessment was carried out with all participants pre and post intervention. Both datasets were mixed to answer each of the research questions. As the project progressed the focus moved more acutely towards the qualitative data as it became clear that this dataset was best placed to address the research question.

7.2 Main Research Findings

The table below summarises findings in relation to each aspect of the research question. It lists the data used in answering each question, the focus of each discussion section and some high-level answers to the research questions.

Table 10. *Summary of discussion pertaining to research questions*

What were the experiences of struggling and reluctant readers at transition in relation to ...	How is this answered by the data?	What does the discussion section focus on?
Cognitive knowledge and skills	Analysis of performance in standardised assessments	Discussion will focus on whether improvement in cognitive knowledge and skills was able to be deployed in order to access valued in-school and out of school domains..
Identity and agency	Analysis of semi structured interviews	Discussion focuses on whether children felt they had power and access, and the importance of children's tastes and interests being part of their reading.
Cultural and social capital	Analysis of semi structured interviews	Discussion focuses on the extent to which children feel like they belong the institution and have the power to influence it.

The standardised assessment data suggested that there were differences in whether the interventions had a positive impact on children's cognitive knowledge and skills. Participants in *Reading Ambassadors* saw no improvement in their attainment as measured by YARC. However, their levels were

already high going into the intervention and remained so. One purpose of the intervention is to encourage "good readers", those who are willing to read, and are capable of reading but are not perhaps motivated to do so through the way reading is positioned in their settings and, with possible risk factors in their profile, to maintain a motivation to read. To that end, the purpose was achieved. Participants from *RWI: Fresh Start* saw improvement in some areas of reading attended to by the improvement of technical skills, especially in terms of fluency and reading rate. However, this did not lead to improvements in their comprehension. Similarly, participants in the *After School Reading Club* made gains in some areas of reading but not in others; Erin did not show improvements in the same areas as Fern.

However, data generated through semi-structured interviews indicated that there was some difference in whether the interventions impacted on participants' personal and social identity and whether children understood these as valuable capital in their literacy development. Regarding *Reading Ambassadors* and the *After School Reading Club*, feelings of power stemmed largely from the opportunity to choose texts and engage in reading practices that worked for them such as choosing when to read, how much to read, where to read and having the option to change their text altogether. Participants in *Read Write Inc: Fresh Start* also reported changes related to identity and agency, with positive discussions around their ability to feel confident in contributing to discussions and in reading aloud in other subject areas.

The semi-structured interview responses can also be attributed to changes in cultural and social capital and how participants enacted that capital both within and beyond the intervention. *Reading Ambassadors* participants reported that they grew in confidence in their discussions with PDGE students and felt that their tastes in texts and their reading practices were valued. Similarly, participants of the *After School Reading Club* shared that they felt empowered to read aloud or discuss texts within their group.

Responses confirmed that for children in these interventions, a link can be made to the development of children's personal and social identity and social and cultural capital in interventions where the social aspect of reading is a key consideration in the intervention's implementation. Additionally, a link can also be made between improvement in technical skills and abilities and interventions where this is the sole, robustly addressed focus. Responses did not give a definitive indication as to which intervention was more valued by participants in terms of their own learner identity and priorities. However, from my own observations and reflections, it is reasonable to argue that an effective approach to intervention will seek to attend to the needs of participants as opposed to assigning them to a “best-fit” intervention. An effective intervention, determined through the impact it has on both reading attainment and attitude to reading, will find a way to recognise learners' complex engagement with literacy and their funds of knowledge by attending to their cognitive knowledge and skills, personal and social identity, and cultural and social capital (Ellis & Smith, 2017). For example, the importance of personal and social identity is supported by King et al., (2013) who propose that classroom-based interventions “can accelerate at-risk students to average (or higher) literacy performance, when that intervention is delivered by students' own classroom teachers” (p. 48). The importance placed on both the intervention being classroom-based and delivered by the class teacher emphasises the importance of not segregating children from their peers.

Reading Ambassadors and the *After School Reading Club* elicited responses from children showing new, or renewed, interest in reading. This largely stemmed from the social aspects of the intervention and the low-stakes environment they worked in. This contrasts with responses from pupils involved in *RWI: Fresh Start*. For instance, Daniel, who participated in *RWI: Fresh Start*, still viewed the programme as less of a spur to begin reading more widely outside of school, and as more of a means to access texts in different subject areas. This means that while his technical skills have improved those skills may not benefit from ongoing progress in the way that those of a more frequent reader would. It is

also possible that *Read Write Inc: Fresh Start participants* will eventually find more difficult texts from favoured subject areas trickier to access if their experience of text does not permeate their leisure time. Clark and Rumbold (2006) who, in discussing why children read, cite the 2005 Reading Connects survey from Clark and Foster, stating “half the pupils read because it is a skill for life and because it will help them find what they need/want to know” (p. 15) This study demonstrates that Clark and Foster’s findings still ring true as participants in this study still identify reading as a means of accessing specific subject area knowledge and content.

7.3 The contribution of this research to the field of reading interventions

Proficiency in reading allows learners at all levels to access the curriculum in increasing depth and complexity, access valued social, economic and civic domains, and to take their place in society (Clark & Rumbold, 2006). In secondary school, that complexity is characterised by the need to be able to access different subject domains and be proficient in the type of reading required in that field. This study sought to understand the separate concepts of “struggling” and “reluctant” readers and identify the most effective type of support to continue their development as readers. This study also shows that learners considered “struggling” or “reluctant” readers still understood the importance of reading to increase or develop levels of power, access and belonging.

The study also problematised the way that labels and rankings such as defining a reader “struggling” or “reluctant” can be unhelpful categorisations. As mentioned before, some of the children labelled “struggling” were able to demonstrate that they had sound comprehension of the texts they read. However, summative assessment of reading in class often privileged their ability to read aloud over other features of reading such as comprehension. Additionally, some children categorised as reluctant readers, particularly Andrew, Bree and Fern, were capable of reading if they had access to material that interested them and a low-risk environment in which to flourish. Moreover, the

experiences of Daniel and Fern demonstrate the lack of depth and nuance attached to the process of ranking children's reading performance as children with difficulties such as dyslexia will often remain behind their peers in performative aspects of reading.

7.3.1 Supporting “Struggling” Readers

In this study's context, “struggling” readers were considered to be those children who found reading difficult on a phonological level. They “struggle” to understand the relationships between sounds and their corresponding phonemes and their classification as “struggling” is defined by educational systems, assumptions, and mechanisms, such as the YARC testing. Additionally, “struggling” readers can find difficulty in blending units of sound and their reading does not have the necessary fluency to support comprehension. Participants who fell into this category were supported to improve their phonological awareness and fluency through participation in *RWI: Fresh Start*.

Drawing a distinction between “struggling” and “reluctant” readers allows teachers to provide the most appropriate support for children. In this study, participants in *RWI: Fresh Start* benefited from focusing on their specific, identified area of need with regular and intensive support from a teacher who had specialist training. While acknowledging that each individual child's needs in reading are different, children involved in *RWI: Fresh Start* benefitted from working with peers who had similar needs and could support each other. The systematic nature of the programme, including sounding out of phonemes, paired practice and the application of new sounds in texts targeted at their level, meant that learners felt a sense of security and recognise progress, as demonstrated by their interview responses. This is supported by King and Homan (2003), who discuss the emergence of Reading Recovery and cite Hiebert (1994) and Taylor et al., (1994) in support of small group intervention. More recently, the need to attend to both phonics and comprehension is supported by Wyse and Hacking (2024).

The intervention was motivational in that participants identified progress in reading with progress in other subject areas, meaning they wanted to succeed to help them to access subjects they enjoyed at a more advanced level. This is consistent with Bourdieu's theory of cultural and social capital discussed in chapter two as participants recognised that progress in reading supported their progress in other areas of the curriculum that they valued. There was also reassurance that the support that had been in place at Primary would continue as needed in Secondary. Another benefit of the programme was the upskilling of practitioners in an area where expertise is scarce in Scottish secondary schools, allowing them to support children with similar needs who were not involved in the intervention. This illustrates one of the benefits of supporting children with difficulties in mainstream settings rather than extracting them, as all children in the class can then benefit from teachers increasing their professional knowledge. It also perhaps addresses the problems caused by arbitrary decisions we made in our cluster around cut-off points for children accessing interventions. If a class teacher is upskilled to support children with a range of needs, those children can be appropriately supported but can also still benefit from access to conversations, peer groups and valued domains during lessons; areas that were flagged for their importance by the children who participated in this study.

This research indicates that those with responsibility for literacy at transition should consider whether a phonics intervention is the right kind of support for children who are making the transition from primary to secondary school. However, as stated by Moss and Huxford (2007), literacy issues are not solely situated within one aspect of reading, and therefore a phonics intervention cannot be treated as a blanket intervention for all children with reading difficulties. This is consistent with the Three Domains Tool, discussed in chapter two, which advocates looking beyond solely technical skills to support children's reading. Phonics interventions should be targeted only at children with specific, ongoing and pronounced gaps in phonics. Teachers should also pay close attention to the impact this intervention may have on learner identity and on peer relationships. There is also the need to consider

our benchmark for being sufficiently proficient in phonics and being able to access the curriculum. Research around how children learn to read (Brooks, 2023; Gee, 2005; Scarborough, 2001; Street, 1994; Wyse & Bradbury, 2023) suggests that phonics does not need to be “fully” in place to develop comprehension as literacy learning and development is not always linear. Therefore, children do not need to be denied valuable experiences, while they develop their phonics knowledge.

In conclusion, the data generated by this study adds to research into supporting “struggling” readers and concludes that support in phonics can improve cognitive knowledge and skills. However, it will potentially be less successful in achieving these goals if the intervention does not also consider the impact on the learner’s identity and agency and on their cultural and social capital. Additionally, teachers must consider the impact of removing a child’s access to their peer support network and must identify, as accurately as possible, the reason why they are a struggling reader. If phonics is not the difficulty in the first place, it stands to reason that a phonics intervention will not be a positive experience and could further entrench the inequity that the school is trying to tackle.

7.3.2 Supporting Reluctant Readers

“Reluctant” readers were considered those unwilling to meaningfully engage with texts despite having a level of phonological awareness and other technical skills that allowed them to do so. Their resistance to reading, especially aloud, can then mistakenly place them alongside learners we would class as “struggling” and offered the same interventions by way of support. This is demonstrated by the experience of Andrew, Bree and Fern, children who could read, but for whom reading was not framed in such a way that motivated them to do so. Placing these children with learners who struggled to read, entrenched the negative views they held of themselves and made them even less likely to value reading.

By focusing on why the participants of *Reading Ambassadors* and the *After School Reading Club* were reluctant to read, the interventions incorporated social practice aspects of reading into the

support they were given. Each child had the freedom to choose their own text and they were free to include digital texts, magazine and online articles, and participants were also able to engage in discussions around texts and had a forum to express their likes and dislikes about what they read which attends to the need to develop their social capital (Brown et al., 2016 ; Dudley-Marling & Murphy, 1997; Farkas, 2017). By adhering closely to ‘The Rights of the Reader’ (Pennac, 2010), participants were also free to discard texts if they did not find them engaging and there was no compulsion to read a certain amount of the text from session to session. This fostered a greater sense of buy-in from children, which was reflected in their attendance and engagement at these sessions. Furthermore, the concept of buy-in is explained by Darvin and Norton (2015) who consider the reasons why learners engage with reading. They suggest that “if learners invest in a language, they do so with the understanding that they will acquire a wider range of symbolic and material resources, which will in turn increase the value of their cultural capital and social power” (p. 37). Darvin and Norton’s reference to “symbolic and material resources” provides another link to Bourdieu’s theory of cultural and social capital, highlighting the way that proficiency in reading can lend greater legitimacy to the types of capital possessed by an individual.

The intervention was attractive to participants because it shifted the position of reading as a task to be completed, using a text they did not enjoy, to a position as a social practice where their views and opinions were valued. Furthermore, the joy of reading was not tempered by the inclusion of a task on completion of each text. The opportunity to discuss their texts with each other, teachers, and in the case of *Reading Ambassadors* PGDE students, was motivational for them as they felt like their views mattered. When considered in the context of the Three Domains Tool, these interventions were motivational because they focused on more than just cognitive knowledge and skills and valued learners’ assets and progress shown through their personal and social identity and their cultural and social capital.

The research indicates that it is important to draw a line between those who struggle with reading and those who are reluctant to read and perhaps to challenge the use of these and similar labels altogether. This allows practitioners to offer impactful interventions that target the specific needs of learners, attending to the various dimensions of literacy and literacy learning. As described in chapter 2.3, these are positioned by Ellis and Smith (2017) in the Three Domains Tool as the cognitive knowledge and skills, identity and agency, and cultural and social capital domains. They recognise the need for support in reading beyond that of technical skills. In addition, they place value on learners' knowledge, experiences and interests (Moll et al., 1992). They also support the building of peer support networks and foster positive relationships with staff which are fundamental to a successful transition to secondary school which is significant as transition is considered a vitally important time in the life and school career of a young person in Scotland (Mowat, 2019).

In conclusion, the data generated by this study builds on existing research in the areas of reading practitioners could attend to when supporting reluctant readers and determines that this approach could improve and maintain performance in reading but can also foster an interest in reading for pleasure which can have a longer term, positive impact in the lives of children both in school and beyond (Ellis & Rowe, 2020). Furthermore, the data gathered from participants in interviews demonstrates that interventions that foreground the social aspect of reading can positively impact on participants' identity and agency and cultural and social capital.

7.4 The contribution of this research to the field of primary/ secondary transition

In this study participants indicated that renewed focus on improving performance and attitude towards reading was a worthwhile pursuit at the beginning of their secondary school careers. They valued the opportunity to work intensely on an area of learning that would help them to be successful in their new establishment. This is significant because it demonstrates that children, despite being labelled

as “struggling” or “reluctant” readers, still retain the motivation to develop and improve, and display an awareness of the significance of reading in and out of the school context. They see reading as a means of enacting power over their institution, accessing social and academic domains that they value, and strengthening their feelings of belonging towards their school.

Furthermore, this study highlighted how the children involved in the study were able to correlate success in reading with success in all areas of the curriculum and in areas of their lives beyond school, such as friendships and family relationships. ¶ The interventions also fostered a sense of belonging in participants as it was clear that the new institution knew them and was taking steps to continue to support them. Children who participated in *RWI: Fresh Start* benefitted from working closely with members of staff who were aware of their needs. On the one hand, this reduced the likelihood of them being exposed as a struggling reader by being asked to read in front of a new peer group. However, the removal from class itself could have further entrenched their own negative views of themselves as readers and, although they avoided the anxiety of reading aloud in front of others, their absence from class confirms their differences to their peers. Participants of *Reading Ambassadors* recognised that their desire to have more influence on the material they read in school was being listened to, as well as increased access to high interest texts and high-quality conversations around them. They indicated that they valued the negotiation around the tension between a text for class and a text of their own choice and could identify the impact both practices had on each other. Finally, attendees of the *After School Reading Club* confirmed that they valued the opportunity to engage with texts of their choosing, without fear of judgement, and to engage in discussions with adults and peers. Their assessment of the intervention is supported by Loh et al., (2024) who contend that “volitional reading, whether for pleasure or learning, is key to student engagement and learning” (p. 531). This makes clear the significance of children having the freedom to choose their texts, not only because it

empowers them or values their tastes and choices, but also because of the positive impact it can have on their learning.

From this study, an important lesson for practitioners, school leaders, local authorities and policy makers is to ensure that transition processes and literacy interventions address key themes of power, access and belonging and align with recommendations made by the Scottish Government in *Transition from Primary to Secondary School* (2021). The report identifies children from lower SES backgrounds as being more likely to experience a negative transition, lower expectations – both of themselves and from their teachers – and a poorer relationship with the establishment. It supports the decision of this research to focus on children from SIMD quintile 1 as well as the idea that practitioners can attend to feelings of power, access and belonging by identifying reasons for the decline of positive attitudes to education in general post transition and ensuring that pedagogical approaches contribute to a positive experience of school. It achieves this by attending to the personal and social dimensions of literacy (Ellis & Smith, 2017) in ways that may foster a motivation to engage with more cognitively complex texts and practice. The significance of teacher expectations is also explored by Malone et al., (2023) who argue that “teacher assumptions about student ability, has been well established as a key contributor to educational achievement” (p. 248).

7.5 Implications for Practice

This research sought to uncover the experiences of a group of learners accessing three reading interventions after transition to secondary school. The data suggests that an accurate understanding of learners’ needs at this stage is important in determining the type of support that would be most beneficial and this lies in the identification of a learner as mainly struggling *or* reluctant as opposed to these designations being conflated into a catch all description such as “poor” readers. It is important

that teachers can approach data, reading practices and attainment with a critical lens and draw from a more holistic model or understanding of reading and literacy generally.

Although this study sought to gain the views of participants on the interventions they had accessed, future studies should consider their opinions prior to the intervention and pay attention to their insights on which areas children themselves feel require improvement. This could ensure a greater level of engagement from children and, ultimately, more successful interventions.

The figure presented below, has been drawn from a number of readings cited in this study (Ellis & Rowe, 2020; Ellis & Smith, 2017; Janks, 2004; Jones, 2013; Mowat, 2019), as well as upon reflection on this study, including the role of data, learners' experiences, and the impact of different interventions, and demonstrates the cycle much of Scottish education finds itself in in 2024.

Figure 15. The impact of attainment as the main driver of education in Scotland.



This diagram tries to illustrate the classroom outcomes that result from the adoption of prescriptive literacy practices, packages or resources. The focus on accountability at national and local level through attainment data leads teachers and school leaders to seek clarity as they attempt to ensure the accuracy and robustness of their data. However, while this approach may plug gaps in

teacher knowledge and be suitable for many children, they do not take account of the social practices that support literacy development. For some children, the use of these generic resources and programmes means that they do not see themselves or their home and community literacy practices represented in the classroom setting. It can lead to disengagement and resistance from children who feel disenfranchised by their classroom experience, an important issue in an education landscape where pupil behaviour is a live issue. Furthermore, the link that exists between prescriptive approaches and teacher burnout is important to consider for a system where teacher recruitment and teacher retention are of great concern.

Finally, while this study focused on the views and experiences of children who accessed the interventions, future research should integrate views and experiences of teachers and other education staff involved in their delivery, as well as parents and carers. Teachers are likely to experience first-hand the benefits of accurately targeted interventions through improved engagement and performance in class, as well as professional learning in the form of a deeper understanding of the primary sector and a deeper understanding of families and their circumstances. This could also lead to improved teacher professional judgement, more accurate assessment of children and more trust across different sectors of the system. These views are important and could be sought and considered as part of further steps taken to improve the transition process. Standardised testing may have its role in recording and understanding learners' literacy development, but the ongoing collection of qualitative data seems necessary to understand learners' wider range of experiences (benefits and challenges, needs and desires) as part of literacy learning. Teachers' professional development in literacy education and support needs to attend to all three dimensions of the Three Domain model if we are to move the system beyond its current, narrow focus on attainment.

7.6 Implications for Future Research

The steps taken by this study sought to accurately identify learners' specific difficulties in reading, before choosing which type of support would be best placed to continue their development as readers. However, this approach is not universally implemented by many schools and local authorities in terms of the depth of knowledge it seeks on learners' difficulties. A larger-scale study is recommended to ascertain if this approach can improve attainment and attitudes to reading.

Furthermore, this study also sought to contribute to the field of Primary/ Secondary transition. While the literature and children's interviews responses identified power, access and belonging as key areas attended to by an effective transition programme and effective reading interventions, there is still little research into what makes an effective transition in the Scottish context. It is recommended that further research takes place in this area. This could provide schools with models of success and perhaps begin the process of establishing a model of good practice in our approach to transition.

7.7 Final conclusion and key messages

There are key messages that can be taken from this study around how teachers support children to become proficient readers. The experiences of Andrew, Bree, Cara, Daniel, Erin and Fern demonstrate that, in Scotland, there is sometimes a disconnect in how teachers assess reading in Primary and Secondary. What we define as 'good' reader, and how a 'good' reader is perceived tends to be based on a narrowly defined set of cognitive knowledge and skills. As Scotland continues its journey towards an evolved Broad General Education curriculum and technical framework (Education Scotland, 2024) it is important to take steps towards positioning literacy as a social practice and broadening the parameters for success to ensure all children can achieve.

This chapter has provided a summary of the project as well as summarising the main research findings. It also identified the contribution this study makes to research in reading and specifies how it can be used to support "struggling" and "reluctant" readers at transition. Furthermore, this chapter

outlined the contribution this study makes to Primary/ Secondary transition and reiterated the importance of transition for children from lower socio-economic status families. The chapter concludes by making recommendations for practice and for future research.

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Appendices

Appendix One – Letter home to parents



Dear Parent/Guardian,

As part of our approach to improving attainment in reading we wish to track the progress of a number of pupils who are involved in the different interventions we offer – Read, Write Inc; Reading Ambassadors; and the After School Reading Club. Our aim is to improve students' attitudes to reading as well as their attainment.

Your child has been selected to take part in this study. The intervention will take place throughout the rest of this school year both within English classes and in extra-curricular will be run by Mr McCrory. Assessment and pupil interviews will be completed before and after to allow us to measure student's progress and assess the effectiveness of each intervention.

Your child's results will be anonymised and published as part of the research. All information will be stored securely in locked cabinets and anonymised for the purpose of the Authority-wide evaluation & reporting as part of the Scottish Attainment Challenge.

If you consent to your child participating in this study could you please sign the attached letter and return to the school.

I appreciate your support for this important initiative. If you have any concerns or queries please contact Mr McCrory directly at xxxx High School.

Yours sincerely,

David McCrory

PT Literacy and Transition

Consent Form

I **give my consent** to my child participating in this part of the research

☐

I **give my consent** to my child's data being used anonymously for the purpose of the research

☐

Child's name (please print): _____ DOB: _____

Parent/guardian signature: _____ Date: _____

Parent/guardian name (please print):

Appendix Two – Local Authority Consent



FAO: (Paul) David McCrory



Education and Families



Dear Mr. McCrory

Research Project: Supporting Struggling and Reluctant Readers at Transition to Secondary School

Thank you for returning the completed application form. I am pleased to inform you that approval has been granted at authority level for you to approach the head teacher of St Aidan's High School, to ask if the school is willing to participate in your research.

When you contact the head teacher you should enclose a copy of this letter as confirmation of [redacted] authorisation but I would remind you that it is the head of establishment who has the final veto over whether his/her school will participate in the research project.

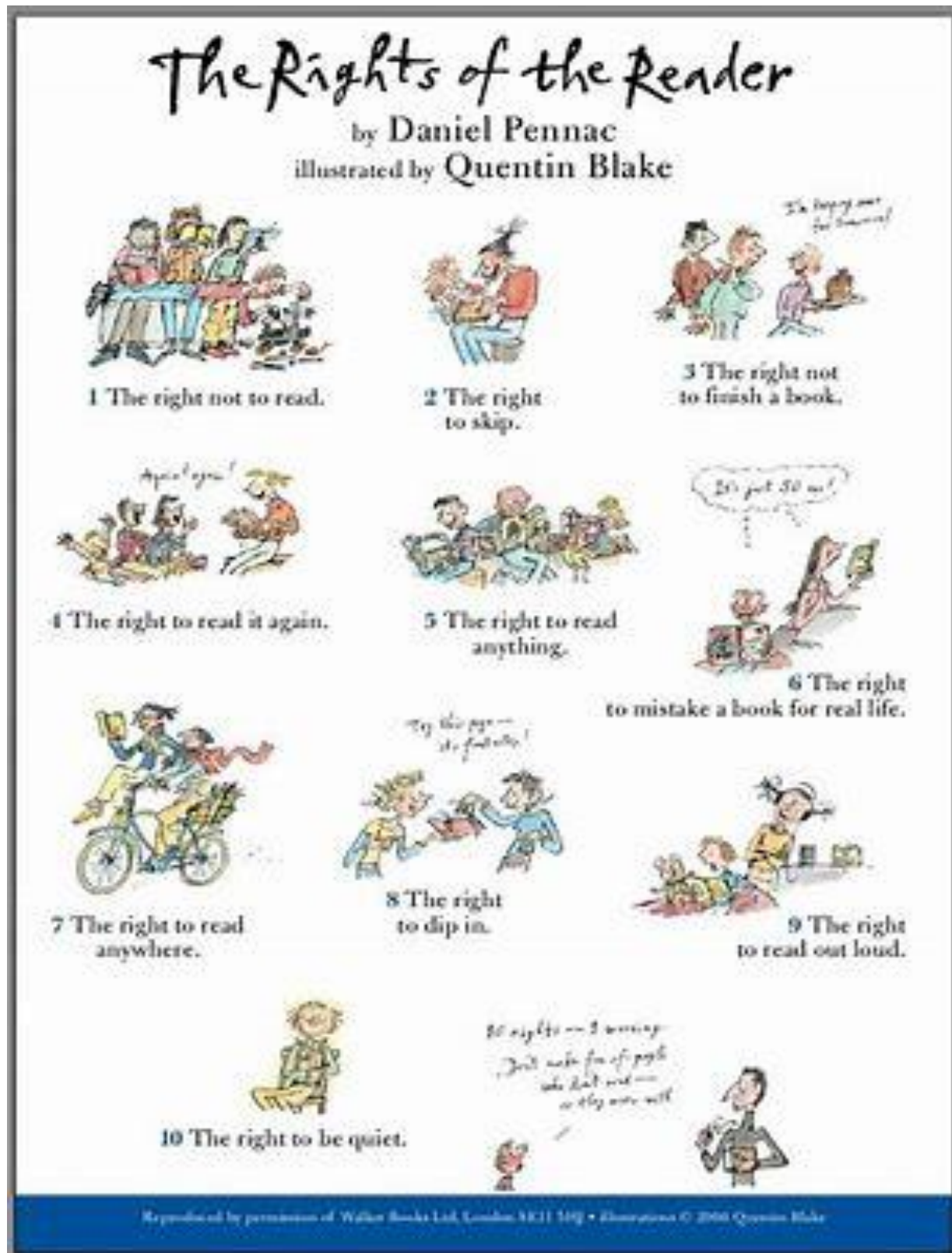
When you have completed your research you should provide each school, if requested, with a copy of your findings.

I wish you very success with your project.

Yours sincerely



Appendix Three – The Rights of the Reader (Pennac, 2010)



Appendix Four – Semi-Structured Interview Questions

Semi-structured interview questions for initial interview with participants (Reading Ambassadors)

Question(s)	Purpose/ Theme
Q1	To establish a positive relationship with interviewee
Q2 – Q6	To gather qualitative data on learner identity (RQ2)
Q7 & Q8	To gather qualitative data on what works (RQ3)

Question	Justification for Question
<p>Question 1: Tell me one good thing that has happened in school today?</p> <p>Prompt: How have your classes been?</p>	To begin by focusing on something positive and to settle and reassure participant. To soften the conversation.
<p>Question 2: Do you read at home? Do your parents read? How many books do you have at home?</p> <p>Prompt: Do you talk about books, films, TV programmes? What do those conversations look like?</p>	To establish how reading is viewed in the participant's home and wider community.
<p>Question 3: How would you describe yourself as a reader?</p> <p>Prompt: Do you read often? Would you say you are a great reader, just ok, or not great at reading at all?</p>	To establish learner identity.

<p>Question 4: How do you know what kind of reader you are?</p> <p>Prompt: What experiences of reading have you had in school?</p> <p>Prompt: Who are the good readers in your class? What do their reading habits look like?</p>	<p>To ascertain experience from school.</p> <p>To assess impact of assessments.</p>
<p>Question 5: How did you hear about RWI/ After School Reading/ Reading Ambassadors? How did you feel about taking part?</p> <p>Prompt: Were you looking forward to it? Why?</p>	<p>To discover the impact being on different interventions has on participants' learner identity.</p>
<p>Question 6: What would you like the intervention to do for you as a reader? Do you think it is important to continue to improve as a reader?</p>	<p>To establish potential for continuing or improved engagement.</p>
<p>Question 7: How will the intervention improve your performance in different areas of learning?</p> <p>Prompt: Will this intervention help you to improve in subjects other than English?</p>	<p>To establish if learner has made links between intervention and wider learning and the importance of reading.</p>
<p>Question 8: Can you identify any areas outside of school where you have been successful as a reader?</p> <p>Prompt: Do you discuss texts, have conversations, tell stories?</p>	<p>To place value on the participant's literacy practices outside of school.</p>

Semi-structured interview questions for follow-up interview with participants (Reading Ambassadors)

Question(s)	Purpose/ Theme
Q1	To establish a positive relationship with interviewee
Q2	To gather qualitative data on learner identity (RQ2)
Q3 – Q6	To gather qualitative data on what works (RQ3)

Question	Justification for Question
<p>Question 1: Tell me one good thing that has happened in school today?</p> <p>Prompt: How have your classes been?</p>	To begin by focusing on a positive and to settle and reassure participant
<p>Question 2: How do you now feel about the intervention you were selected to take part in (RWI/ After School Reading/ Reading Ambassadors)? Has it changed how you view yourself as a reader?</p> <p>Prompt: Did you find it helpful? Why?</p>	To discover the impact being on different interventions has on participants' learner identity.
<p>Question 3: Do you read at home more than before the intervention?</p> <p>Prompt: Do you talk about books, films, tv programmes? What do those conversations look like?</p>	To establish any change in how reading is viewed in the participants home and wider community.

<p>Question 4: Do you think the intervention improved you as a reader? Why is that important?</p> <p>Prompt: Are you a better reader now than before? How do you know?</p>	<p>To establish potential for continuing or improved engagement.</p> <p>To identify next steps for the learner.</p>
<p>Question 5: Can you access texts in other subjects more easily than you did before? How do you know?</p> <p>Prompt: Did this intervention help you to improve in subjects other than English?</p>	<p>To establish if learner has made links between intervention and wider learning and the importance of reading.</p>
<p>Question 6: Can you identify any areas outside of school where you have been successful as a reader?</p> <p>Prompt: Do you discuss texts, have conversations, tell stories?</p>	<p>To stress the value of the participant's literacy practices outside of school.</p>

Semi-structured interview questions for combined interview with participants (Read Write Inc: Fresh Start; After School Reading Club)

Question(s)	Purpose/ Theme
Q1	To establish a positive relationship with interviewee
Q2 – Q6	To gather qualitative data on learner identity (RQ2)
Q7 & Q8	To gather qualitative data on what works (RQ3)

Question	Justification for Question
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<p>Question 1: Tell me one good thing that has happened in school today?</p> <p>Prompt: How have your classes been?</p>	<p>To begin by focusing on something positive and to settle and reassure participant. To soften the conversation.</p>
<p>Question 2: Prior to the intervention did you read at home? Do your parents read? How many books do you have at home? Do you read at home more than before the intervention?</p> <p>Prompt: Do you talk about books, films, TV programmes? What do those conversations look like?</p>	<p>To establish how reading is viewed in the participant's home and wider community.</p> <p>To track changes resulting from the intervention.</p>
<p>Question 3: How would you describe yourself as a reader before the intervention? How about after the intervention?</p> <p>Prompt: Do you read often? Would you say you were a great reader, just ok, or not great at reading at all? Has anything changed as a result of our work?</p>	<p>To establish impact of intervention on learner identity.</p>
<p>Question 4: How do you know what kind of reader you are? Do you know if this has changed?</p> <p>Prompt: What experiences of reading have you had in school?</p> <p>Prompt: Who are the good readers in your class? What do their reading habits look like? Do you see yourself adopting these practices now?</p>	<p>To ascertain experience from school.</p> <p>To assess impact of assessments.</p>

<p>Question 5: How did you feel about taking part? Was your opinion different after the intervention?</p> <p>Prompt: Were you looking forward to it? Why?</p>	<p>To discover the impact being on different interventions has on participants' learner identity.</p>
<p>Question 6: What did the intervention to do for you as a reader? Do you think it is important to continue to improve as a reader?</p>	<p>To establish potential for continuing or improved engagement.</p>
<p>Question 7: Has the intervention improved your performance in different areas of learning?</p> <p>Prompt: Have you improved in subjects other than English?</p>	<p>To establish if learner has made links between intervention and wider learning and the importance of reading.</p>
<p>Question 8: Can you identify any areas outside of school where you were successful as a reader? Have you had any further success since the intervention?</p> <p>Prompt: Do you discuss texts, have conversations, tell stories?</p>	<p>To place value on the participant's literacy practices outside of school.</p>

Appendix Five – Interview Transcripts

PDM: Hi Andrew. So we're going to carry out this interview about your reading but before we start how have your classes been today? You were in double French there.

Andrew: Yeah fine. It was Spanish there just now and P.E Period 1 and 2.

PDM: Ah! That's quite good isn't it because at the minute you get to come in wearing your P.E stuff don't you?

Andrew: Yeah.

PDM: And what about this week – how have things been? You obviously started with us in August. All ok since the beginning and are things ticking along well?

Pupil: Yeah.

PDM: And you're one of the pupils who is going to be part of the Reading Ambassadors programme. So let's get started then.

PDM: To begin I just want to find out a bit about your reading habits. I want to figure out where we stand just now in terms of your personal reading. So would you say you read at home?

Andrew: Yeah

PDM: What sort of stuff do you read?

Andrew: I quite like sci-fi and I've been reading books like 'Alex Ryder' and 'Power of Five'.

PDM: Ok so what age would you say you got into 'Alex Ryder' and 'Power of Five'?

Andrew: I started Alex Ryder first, maybe about 11.

PDM: So maybe end of P6, start of P7?

Andrew: Well we actually read the first Alex Ryder book in P6 and that told me I liked that stuff.

PDM: Ok. And then getting that into that series, reading the first book, was that what hooked you into that?

Andrew: Yeah.

PDM: Ok. What about at home. Do your parents read a lot?

Andrew: Not really. Sometimes on holiday. They always bring a book but they don't always finish it.

PDM: But you wouldn't say they read at home? You don't go home and see people reading?

Andrew: Maybe the newspaper.

PDM: Do you ever talk about your books with anyone else in the house? Do you ever talk about what's going on in the books you're reading?

Andrew: Yeah.

PDM: And do you do the same kind of thing for films, TV and stuff like that? Like are you watching anything on Netflix at the moment?

Andrew: Yeah I'm watching 'Modern Families'.

PDM: And do you all watch that together?

Andrew: No just me and my sister.

PDM: So when you do talk about your books what do those conversations look like? Who does most of the talking?

Andrew: I mostly talk but my mum and dad ask me questions and I tell them all about it because I find it quite interesting.

PDM: Good.

PDM: So the next question I want to ask is what do you think of yourself as a reader?

Andrew: I wouldn't say I'm a bad reader. I think I'm ok and I quite like reading.

PDM: Would you say you read quite often?

Andrew: Yeah. Well, during the holidays I read but I haven't really read as much since I came back to school.

PDM: I'm thinking about your reading and, obviously I have your primary data there, but where you would position yourself as a reader? Did you have a reading group or anything like that?

Andrew: I don't think we really had reading groups.

PDM: Ok. Just more of a whole class thing? Ok so across the class then where would you place yourself? It's a crude way to measure but top, middle or bottom?

Andrew: Near the top.

PDM: OK, good. And I guess like, and I'm going to use this word now and sometimes people get it and sometimes they don't, but if you're the sort of person who constantly reads books we'd say you were an avid reader. Would you describe yourself like that?

Andrew: I wouldn't say that. I enjoy reading before I go to bed but haven't really done that recently.

PDM: Ok. And I suppose lockdown would have had an impact on that. Having more time then would make a difference. Did you read more then?

Andrew: Yeah I got the 'Power of Five' set and I read about 7 books during lockdown.

PDM: That's brilliant. So you're telling me that you are quite a good reader and I would agree but how do you know that?

Andrew: Well I read a lot back then and I noticed that no one in my class read too much when they went home. Some did but probably less than half the class.

PDM: That's brilliant. So you could see that you were one of the people who did read. What was your experience of reading in Primary school?

Andrew: It just depended on the book really. I quite liked it but if it was a book I didn't like it could be boring.

PDM: Yeah. And obviously this project we're doing you got to choose the book and it makes a difference if you're interested in it doesn't it?

Andrew: Yeah.

PDM: So if you think about other good readers in your class, would you say that they had similar reading habits to you? Did they go home and read all the time?

Andrew: I wouldn't say I read all the time but I would if I was on a cliff hanger or something. I noticed others in the class would even read before school.

PDM: That's good. And I suppose you see that you have similar reading habits to them.

PDM: Ok, so how did you feel about being asked to take part in Reading Ambassadors?

Andrew: I was interested. Pleased I had been chosen.

PDM: Are you looking forward to it?

Andrew: Yeah.

PDM: What do you think is the difference between this project and the reading we do in class? I guess the difference between the type of reading we ask you to do on this project and the reading you do elsewhere.

Andrew: I guess at Primary school it was more like you would read and then do a task or answer questions on it. A lot of it was like 'do you know what this word means?'. You would read but you always had to do a task.

PDM: Is that quite frustrating? If you're reading a book and you enjoy it we make you stop and answer questions on it?

Andrew: You just learn it's the way the class works.

PDM: Ok, what do you think you would like Reading Ambassadors to do for you as a reader?

Andrew: Maybe just to help keep reading. I enjoyed reading but since we've come back I have football and other things and I don't have as much time and even when I do I'm tired. I also don't get enjoyment out of a book if I'm not reading it that much.

PDM: That's good and I suppose that's something I was going to come back to. That you feel time is an issue as you've come back to school and things start to reopen. Has the reading you were doing in lockdown maybe tailed off a wee bit now?

Andrew: Yeah I think so.

PDM: Ok. Do you think it is important to continue to improve as a reader? You're obviously a good reader but you said you don't get time. Is it important to make the time?

Andrew: Yeah. I guess if I never got any better it wouldn't motivate you to keep reading as if you started reading a book that was too hard it could put you off reading for a while.

PDM: Definitely. So what subjects would you say are most dependent on reading?

Andrew: English.

PDM: Yeah – definitely English isn't it? Do you think that what we're doing with Reading Ambassadors will be helpful in other areas of learning?

Andrew: Yeah because it helps me in Spanish and reading to pick up information.

PDM: Last question – what about outside of school? Would you say beyond formal learning can you identify anywhere you've been successful? Where reading has either got you into a community or friendship group or led to an activity outside of school?

Andrew: Not really. I used to talk to my friend at primary about the same books we read at breaks and lunches.

PDM: I think it's good when you find those areas and things you have in common. If your interest in books has brought you together that's great. Do you talk about books outside of the classroom?

Andrew: Sometimes yeah. If it comes up during conversation and someone asks what I'm reading I'll tell them.

PDM: That's good because I think sometimes we maybe feel like we don't talk about what we read for whatever reason.

PDM: Thanks very much. At the end of the reading Ambassadors project we'll come back and look at this again but for now, thank you very much!

Andrew: Yeah. Thanks.

Andrew: Exit Interview

PDM: Hi Liam how are you?

Andrew: I'm good

PDM: So this is the follow up interview to the one we completed back in September and it is really just to see how you got on with the RA programme, how you felt it impacted upon your reading and where you are now. We'll also chat about how lockdown affected all of that but first things first – was it social subjects you've come out of this morning?

Andrew: Yeah I enjoy it. We're doing Mount Fiji.

PDM: The geography unit just now?

Andrew: Yeah.

PDM: Do you find that you use a lot of reading in Socials? Is that a skill you rely on in that subject?

Andrew: Yeah I use it a lot, especially in history when we have to read to find the answers to questions.

PDM: So I'm going to start off by thinking about RA and how you feel about it. Now that you've been through it how do you view it and has it changed your view of yourself as a reader?

Andrew: I think it has motivated me to read more. We've been talking about the books a lot and I quite enjoy it.

PDM: Ok. Being motivated to read more is interesting. So would you say you read more now than you did before.

Andrew: Well I read a lot during lockdown but I would say I've kept it going since returning to school.

PDM: I suppose maybe it gave you a bit of a boost before lockdown. I remember when we talked about this back in September it was almost like you had started Secondary school and you didn't really have time for reading anymore. So I guess I'm asking did you find the intervention helpful?

Andrew: Yeah. Definitely. I find that I'm reading more fluently and more confidently.

PDM: And thinking of socials where you've just come from, do you find that having more experience as a reader helps you?

Andrew: Yeah. I would say I can understand passages much more clearly now.

PDM: So the next thing to think about is whether you read more now as a result of taking part in RA?

Pupil B: Yeah. I've been reading Star Wars books and I've started to read comics so I've started to read more because of that.

PDM: You always mentioned being into sci-fi and it's good to see you're looking at different types. I like those books too. They open up the films a bit and it allows you to go and find out more about characters that you like.

Andrew: Yeah definitely. It expands on things you like and gives you more knowledge of it.

PDM: I think that's the perfect combination isn't it? When what you watch and what you read and what you're interested in all come together. I think that's great.

PDM: Thinking about home again. We talked previously about conversations you had about books. Would you say you still have them?

Pupil B: Yeah. Especially on holiday. We all have a book with us and read a lot and we'll talk about our books. I speak to them about my comics too and my dad goes with me to buy them. He's not a big fan of comics but I tell him what I want and he has a look around for me.

PDM: I think the comics are just as valuable as the novels are. We talked at the start of this project about having the right to read anything and reading comics is part of that.

PDM: So would you say RA improved you as a reader?

Andrew: Yeah I would. I read before but it made me more confident and made me realise things more when I was reading. I'm getting better at picking up hints when I read.

PDM: Would you say that has been the main thing – the level of confidence?

Andrew: Yeah. And also like I said before, it motivated me to read more. It made me realise I should read more, then you do it and you start to enjoy it.

PDM: You've probably already touched on this but why is it important to keep improving? You're a good reader anyway but why is it important to move on from the level you were at, at the end of P7?

Andrew: If you stopped there you wouldn't learn anything new. I know there's stuff in some subjects I need to know and get better at. You need to expand your knowledge on different things and improve your fluency and confidence. If you haven't done it in a while you wouldn't be as excited or happy to do it.

PDM: Ok. Thinking about other subject areas. You've just been in Socials and there's an obvious link because there's a lot of reading in that subject but what about in other subjects? Do you think RA and reading more widely has given you a little bit of improvement in other subjects?

Andrew: Yeah, well in English obviously you do a lot of reading but every subject has a wee bit of reading. You never have to read too much but in other subjects like HE you may have to read a safety passage and your reading comes in there.

PDM: I wonder if there's an interesting question around that type of reading. You're saying you don't read that type of text that often which is a fact. How do you find the ability to switch between informative stuff and creative stuff? Do you feel confident doing that?

Andrew: The reading is fine but sometimes I'm not as interested in that part of it.

PDM: That's it, isn't it? That's you making informed decisions as a reader because you've read widely enough to know what you like. You're aware of the topic and the context and that you're not necessarily going to enjoy it. That's a good point to make.

PDM: Last question then, I guess. Can you identify areas outside of school or learning where reading has been successful for you?

Andrew: Well at home I read myself and I feel like it would help me learn about things and contribute if I work in a group.

PDM: So I guess it makes you feel like you can go away and learn something and bring it back to the group. That ability to feel like you can contribute social is quite important. But it's also important to have that power that if you want to know something you can go and find out if it is true. You have that ability to read and understand which allows you to do that.

Andrew: Yeah when you're reading through something you can question it.

PDM: Yes. And your previous interview you talked about how reading was a social thing for you and that confirms that.

Andrew: Yeah. I have a friend who reads comics and a lot of the time we talk about them and talk about what's going on in them. If I didn't read or couldn't read we wouldn't be as friendly.

PDM. Thanks because you've helped me understand that in a new way. As much as the social aspect is to do with books we have read in common it isn't just that. The ability to contribute and understand allows you to be respected and respect other people.

PDM: Just a last thought – did you like working with the students? Was it enjoyable doing it online?

Andrew: I thought it was quite good. As much as we were talking to them it started conversations with each other too.

PDM: XXXX, thank you. That was brilliant.

Andrew: No problem.

Bree Transcript – Pre-intervention Interview

PDM: Hi Bree. So this interview is part of the Reading Ambassadors programme that you're going to be a part of but before we start, how have things been today?

Bree: Yeah good.

PDM: How are you settling in because obviously you just started with us in August?

Bree: Fine. Still a bit iffy finding my way around but getting better.

PDM: That's good.

PDM: So we're going to have a conversation about reading this morning and I just want to begin by asking about how reading goes at home. Would you say you read at home?

Bree: My dad is a big reader. My mum used to read a lot but doesn't so much now. My dad maybe actually used to be a big reader. He has a lot of horror books which I may gravitate towards reading at some point. I have horror novels at home too.

PDM: Do you talk about those books with your mum and dad at home? Do they have conversations about them?

Bree: Usually I'm the one to bring it up.

PDM: And that answers my next question about what those conversations look like and I guess it is you leading them which is great. Do you do the same with TV programmes and Films?

Bree: Yeah but that's sometimes more my parents leading it. They'll talk about something that they've been waiting on me to be mature enough to watch.

PDM: See that's interesting isn't it because you're talking about the horror books which probably deal with mature themes but we would hardly ever think 'don't let them read that'.

Bree: I guess it's because it's more visual but I'd say that can be worse if you're reading it because you're picturing it and you have to make it up in your own mind instead of seeing it.

PDM: Definitely. I would agree with that.

PDM: Ok, so if we think about you as a reader, how would you describe yourself?

Bree: I like it but it makes me pretty tired and I can be slow with it. I'm a lot more fluent in my head than I am speaking aloud but I'm pretty sure everyone is like that.

PDM: Would you say you read quite often?

Bree: Not as much as I would like to.

PDM: What stops you from reading? What gets in the way?

Bree: There's not a lot of time for it really.

PDM: What kind of things are you doing?

Bree: I have homework, family, going out on walks and things like that.

PDM: Ok. What about lockdown? Did you get a chance to read more then?

Bree: I read a bit more of the horror book I was talking about. I like it so far. It's kind of like, may have heard a spoiler but I think it is just a bit from a later book.

PDM: What is it?

Bree: The 5 Nights at Freddie's series. It's the first book in the series. 5 Nights at Freddie's is a horror game and the first book I'm reading now is called 'The Silver Eyes.'

PDM: Ok. Good.

PDM: So I'm probably going to tap into something you mentioned earlier but what kind of reader do you think you are and how do you know? What was reading like at Primary school?

Bree: I enjoyed some of them. I was a bit bummed out that we didn't get to do 'War Horse' as I like history. It was kind of boring and I was unenthusiastic about it because I didn't like the premise. It wasn't something I would be interested in.

PDM: What was it? What did you end up doing in P7?

Bree: I'm not sure of the name. It started with a K.

PDM: Was it Kensuke's Kingdom?

Bree: That was it! I started to like it later on when I realised it was about Hiroshima which was bombed.

PDM: You just found it harder to get into I suppose. So thinking about you as a reader – and you've talked about pace and the time you take – so would you say you're a good reader?

Bree: I don't really know how to class that if you know what I mean?

PDM: And that's difficult I agree. I think it is difficult to know how to class it. If you compared yourself to the people who were in your class would that help?

Bree: Well I know I read more because it is rare to see someone in S1 reading. The main reason I picked up the Silver Eyes book is because I'm genuinely interested in the story behind the game and I think it's fun. It started off as an indie game and then it got bigger. There's a new game coming out and another book series out just now.

PDM: When you say game, what do you mean?

Bree: It's a point and click horror game.

PDM: You know my son has a Switch and I see a lot of point and click games but I've never really thought he would like them as I think of a game as doing something rather than reading but what you're telling me is that there is lots and lots of reading involved in these games which is great as that's another sort of medium for your reading that we as teachers don't even think about.

Bree: There's some things you can get on Steam like that, vision novels.

PDM: That's really interesting. I often ask people what they do if they don't read at home and the answer can be "I play COD" but you have to read to follow that game.

Bree: Reading is a part of everything but you just don't really notice it.

PDM: Ok so can we talk a bit about how you said you were a slow reader? Did that make you feel like you didn't want to get involved with things like reading aloud? How did it impact your view of yourself as a reader?

Bree: It made me a bit less motivated. It made me kind of drift from it as my dad could read books like that (snaps fingers) and there were people in my class who were on the last chapter of a book when I was on the 3rd.

PDM: I'm interested in that. Do you feel like you've got to keep up? Do you feel a sort of pressure to be a quick reader? From what I know of you and the chats we've had, your comprehension is brilliant, so why should you feel a pressure to be fast?

Bree: Because sometimes it takes me a second for the words to register.

PDM: So think about Reading Ambassadors, which will be starting very soon, how did you feel about being asked to take part?

Bree: I was happy with it as I've always liked English. Reading can make me tired sometimes.

PDM: Just linking back to your point and click games, I wonder if they have music playing in the background which helps you?

Bree: Yes they do – or they have other side missions to maintain your attention.

PDM: So what would you like Reading Ambassadors to do for you as a reader?

Bree: I would like to improve it. I'd like it to get me to read a bit more.

PDM: Do you think it stands a chance of doing that?

Bree: I hope so. I chose the Peaky Blinders book and that's history and I enjoy that.

PDM: That's a key thing isn't it? You were talking about not enjoying Kensuke's Kingdom but because you're into this you're more likely to read it and enjoy it.

Bree: I didn't like it at the start. I didn't like that type of mentor narrative. I like it in TV shows but I think they portray it differently. It seems slow in books.

PDM: Do you think it's important for you to continue to improve as a reader?

Bree: For convenience most likely. If we're just talking about reading a book I'm quite happy to take my time as then I get to savour it.

PDM: So do you make a link between reading at home and learning?

Bree: Yes because if I get quicker at that then I'll be quicker in school. I look up a lot and even if I've stared at something on the board I'll still look back up. Maybe this will help it to stay in my head for longer.

PDM: Do you think Reading Ambassadors will help you to improve in other areas of learning?

Bree: Probably because it'll help my concentration.

PDM: So I guess it's about experience isn't it? The more you read the better you'll get and this gives you the chance to do that.

Bree:

PDM: Ok last question. Are there any areas outside of school, and the game counts for this, where you have been successful as a reader?

Bree: I usually go for horror games but interest in reading led me to other games which has broadened my horizons.

PDM: So that game is an example of a real life situation where reading has helped you to be successful at something. Do you have discussions or talk about these new texts or games you've enjoyed? Do you find reading being a part of your wider life?

Bree: Of course it is. Reading is part of everything.

PDM: Sophie that was brilliant - thank you so much.

Bree: Exit Interview

PDM: Hi Sophie. Nice to see you again. How are you?

Bree: I'm not too bad.

PDM: So this is the follow up to the interview we had back in September. So what have I taken you out of today?

Bree: Music.

PDM: Do you like music?

Bree: Most of my subjects I don't really mind.

PDM: And how have things been? How did you get on during the last lockdown?

Bree: It's been ok. I've been drawing loads.

PDM: So RA – how did you feel about it and working online with the students etc? Before we started you felt quite positive about taking part – is that still the case?

Bree: Yeah. I quite enjoyed it.

PDM: What did you like about it?

Bree: I liked that I had something to read and I liked having someone to talk to about it. I like sinking my teeth into fictional worlds. That's what I do with my dad a lot. I've just watched my first anime and we talk about that a lot as he has similar tastes to me.

PDM: Ok, good. It seems to have allowed you to branch out. You talked about anime there. I seem to remember last time you spoke about liking horror. Are you still into that?

Bree: Yeah. Horror films are scary but I like the thought of things being described to you and your mind is obviously going to make that worse. Like the thought of picturing it. Everyone pictures things differently. That's what I like about drawing. I like to be able to visualise things.

PDM: I have a question later on on this and I think you're going to give a very original answer to it but I'll come that in a minute.

PDM: Would you say reading ambassadors has changed your view of yourself as a reader. I always felt as if you didn't give yourself the credit you deserve so going online and talking with adults, did that help?

Bree: Yeah. I suppose so.

PDM: Did you feel like you had a lot to contribute?

Bree: Yeah. It could just be me and the fact that I like to get into fictional worlds but I seemed to be speaking a lot more which made me feel bad because I probably made the calls longer.

PDM: No. That's what we wanted. We definitely wanted you to engage with it and you did that.

PDM: So, next question. Since you've taken part in RA and we got you those books do you feel that you read more at home than you did?

Bree: Yes! I've got quite a few books in my house. There's obviously the one I was reading for RA and the ones my dad has got for me and my library books. I read quite a lot on my phone too. I read a lot of digital novels.

PDM: How do you find that? I always find the text just that bit too small but when I enlarge it I don't like the fact that I can only see a paragraph at a time. I feel as if I want to know ... I find it strange. But you quite like reading on your phone?

Bree: Yeah. There's an app I'm using.

PDM: Is it WattPad?

Bree: Yeah! I assumed you'd know that! There's a feature where you can read offline and I like to do that when I go out walking. If I have to go to a place and wait for someone I'll read while I'm waiting. I find it difficult to focus if it's silent which is why I like a classroom as there's always some noise.

PDM: We touched on this earlier but do you still have conversations about reading at home? Do you have them more than you used to? How has that changed?

Bree: I still talk a lot about things I'm interested in. I need to get into a book again. The one I'm reading for RA just now I feel like I could write it. I'm a bit snobby about it but if the writing isn't that good I just switch off. There's another book I'm reading just now though that I really like.

PDM: What is it?

Bree: I don't remember the names for the life of me but both of them are on my app. One of them is what you call a One Shot and Drabble. One Shots are like the only version of this

but it isn't really a story. Sometimes there'll be a part 2 later in the story but I read two really big ones of One Shots and Drabbles because I like the idea of a prompt.

PDM: That's really interesting, especially for people who do the job I do. I don't know that we take account of how you consume literature and the type of literature you consume these days. When you're talking about those One Shots I'm not sure we take account of that. Really interesting

PDM: So – Reading Ambassadors – do you think it has helped you as a reader?

Bree: It has given me more motivation to read so that I could talk about it. So I suppose it has given me the idea that I'm going to read more and that I quite like it.

PDM: And what aspect of it was it that made you do that – the novels, access to new texts, access to people to talk to?

Bree: I do really like talking to people but I did like most of the books too. I did find something with the Peaky Blinders book. I really like History and mythology, I always have, but when I picked that up it turns out it was a bit of a chore. Because I had to do it for school it was a bit dull. The type of book it was, like it was just a large Wikipedia page and that wasn't very good.

PDM: Yeah and they're selling that book on the back of Peaky Blinders aren't they? People maybe buy it thinking it's fiction and it's actually more of a historical document.

Bree: It was still interesting though.

PDM: What you've said is interesting though as my purpose with RA was to have you pick your own book and have no pressure to read. Did you still feel that pressure because you had those sessions coming up?

Bree: Yeah I didn't really want to be the one who hadn't read anything.

PDM: But maybe that's a sort of positive interdependence. Being part of that group you don't want to show up being the person who hasn't read anything so you then feel forced to read. I guess where I was going with that is that I was trying to make it not like school. I didn't want it to be like a task that killed the reading. Maybe that's something we need to look at and broaden those parameters a wee bit more. Maybe there needs to be more time between sessions. Good thinking, well done!

PDM: Do you think you're a better reader now than you were back in September?

Bree: Probably because I do it a lot more.

PDM: Do you think RA has helped that?

Bree: Yeah because it gave me the push to do this.

PDM: Ok. So thinking about reading in other subjects and the type of reading you do there. Has being part of RA has helped you to access the texts that you read in other subjects? Do you make the link that reading books helps you read a physics textbook or biology textbook?

Bree: 100% it does. I know that but it only comes into my head when I'm sat in my room and I see the correlation.

PDM: That's good.

PDM: Last question. I think! I like interviewing you as we tend to go off topic!

Bree: I do that with my dad too. We forget what we're talking about.

PDM: What about outside of learning or outside of school? Can you identify any successes you've had? It can be a thing or a friendship or just something that's better because of reading.

Bree: I'm sorry. I'm not getting that!

PDM: I know. It may be a bit different for you because you are an avid reader so I have a different question for you. Tell me about the link between your reading and your art.

Bree: I do like that when I read and it describes a character. Sometimes I like to draw the characters to see how I envision them. At the end of the book I'll compare my idea to the author's idea. I like adding in those smaller details.

PDM: That's good and again I guess it is almost like your drawing is for you, not for school. People say drawing is good for you mental health and relaxation.

Bree: It's true – except when I'm trying to draw anatomy. I find that stressful – especially hands! I try to take photos to help me.

PDM: So link that to your reading. Some of the horror novels you read. Have you ever read of a bloody, severed hand and thought 'I'm going to draw that?'

Bree: Yeah! I have a few times.

PDM: Bree that was brilliant, thank you!

Cara Interview Transcript

PDM: Ok hi (Cara). We, as we talked about – if you don't hit the giggles (!) – are going to do this interview. How has today been? What have you been up to?

Cara: It's been good.

PDM: What were you in today?

Cara: Home. Ec. I had P.E first thing.

PDM: And what do you do in Home Ec. Just now because you weren't in the kitchens.

Cara: We were writing about vitamin D and that, so we're ready for cooking.

PDM: So, learning all the nutritional stuff so that when you're ready to go, you go?

Cara: Yeah.

PDM: Good, so, you were in the Read, Write Inc (RWI) class last year and if it hadn't been for the whole coronavirus thing we would have done an interview before and after then talked about it. But because we can't ...

PDM: So, what I really want to get are your thoughts on it (RWI), and just find out a bit more about you as a reader. So before RWI would you say you read at home?

Cara: I did.

PDM: What kind of books did you read?

Cara: Any books I could find. If I was stuck on one I would just leave it out and go on with other ones I know. But sometimes I tried them.

PDM: Right, ok. What about at home? Do other people in the house read?

Cara: Chloe reads (sister). I don't know. I don't pay attention to other people.

PDM: And another thing I want to ask is do people in the house talk about books, films, tv shows together?

Cara: Yeah. Me and my mum are into a series about horses and how you heal them. Me and my mum talk about it and share our thoughts, and talk about when the new season is coming out. It might be coming out this month but it might be next year.

PDM: Yeah. A lot of things have stalled haven't they? When you talk about the horses programme does that make you want to go and get a book about that and read it?

Cara: I would.

PDM: So that's something you would like to read if you could find it?

PDM: Ok. What about in the house – and this might seem like a daft question – how many books do you have? Is it more than you can count or would you say, like 5?

Cara: No I have quite a lot.

PDM: Good!

PDM: Next thing then is to think about do you read more after being involved in RWI or do you read less or is it just the same? What impact has it had on your reading habits?

Cara: So I like reading but if I like a book I like it and I'll get stuck into it but if it's about something I'm not really keen on I don't really read it and I don't take an interest.

PDM: Ok, so I guess everything to do with your reading is dependent on whether you like the book or not?

Cara: Yeah.

PDM: That's a big factor for you.

Cara: Yeah because if things are of no interest to me then I dislike it.

PDM: So before RWI how would you describe yourself as a reader?

Cara: Are you talking about primary 7?

PDM: Yeah.

Cara: Well I was in RWI in P7.

PDM: So what does that mean to you? If you're saying "I was in RWI" what does that mean to you?

Cara: It just means I get extra help than the other people need. Because the teacher had us in a wee table and she would get us onto a task, then deal with the rest of the class and then come back to us. But I liked it.

PDM: Do you feel that it helped you?

Cara: In primary 7, yeah.

PDM: Am I right in thinking that when you say you were in RWI that means you felt you weren't a good reader?

Cara: No. I just felt like I needed extra help.

PDM: And what about now after having done it in here for a year. How do you feel about yourself now?

Pupil: I don't know. It's like there are certain words I get stuck with but the words I've seen before I'm ok and I know them.

PDM: Right, ok. Good.

PDM: So to think about what we were doing beforehand – and maybe this relates to your last point – you've told me already that you read quite a lot at home. Do you read more because of RWI? Has it changed the amount you read at home?

Cara: I guess, because RWI helped me when I was in P7 last year and I'm glad it's helped me because that's what it's meant to do.

PDM: Ok. We're going to come on and talk about that in a second or two. I'm thinking about that experience you've mentioned from primary school and I wonder how you knew what kind of reader you are. Did you do tests, did the teacher tell you or did you see other people reading and that made you think about where you were?

Cara: Well, the teacher did a test with all of us. The green cards, the blue cards, whatever. She did them with everyone in class and the ones who needed most help she put in a wee group. I think I was better when my pals were testing me because the teacher made us read aloud and when I had to say it aloud it felt different.

PDM: How did you feel about getting picked out to do RWI in primary?

Cara: I didn't mind because one of my pals was there and I knew it was going to help me.

PDM: Right ok. What about now? How do you feel about doing those assessments and your experience as a reader in school? If someone new came into class and asked you to read aloud how would you feel?

Cara: I don't know. I could say yes but with the words I'm stuck at I just skip. I asked the teacher if I could read something out in Home. Ec but there was a word I was stuck at and I left it out and it still sounded the way it should.

PDM: It's good that you volunteered. That's brilliant that you said you wanted to read aloud.

PDM: Again – and we may have touched on this a bit – when we talked about RWI at first how did you feel when I said I wanted you to be involved?

Cara: I was alright with it but I think when my pals left it made me feel a bit down. When your pals are there it can affect your concentration. I don't know.

PDM: I think what you said makes a lot of sense. So when Sophie and Bethany weren't involved in it, it made you feel a bit down.

Cara: Yeah because Sophie was the only person there from my school and when she left I was really upset. But it's good for her to go and do better. I don't want her to stay when she could be better. I want her to do good.

PDM: And Sophie was in RWI in primary as well wasn't she?

Cara: Yeah she was and we were partners and we helped each other. We were meant to stay in the class but we didn't.

PDM: I guess then you maybe were looking forward to it at first but when Sophie moved out that changed your opinion on it. How do you feel about it now?

Cara: I don't know. I still kind of feel the exact same but I feel like I can do better. I would like Sophie in it because I think I would do so much better than I am but it's better for her.

PDM: Ok, thank you.

PDM: So what do you think RWI did for you as a reader? In terms of improving as a reader and getting better.

Cara: I think the green words and red words I kind of knew but the green words helped me because the “best friends”. I think it helped me.

PDM: This question isn’t on the list but do you feel you’re better at RWI or that you’re a better reader? Because you can tell me lots about that system and green words etc but do you feel like you know RWI quite well but does that translate into reading regularly beyond that class?

Cara: Like if I was put in a bigger class? Yeah, I think I could do it because RWI boosted me.

PDM: Well here’s another slightly unrelated question – do you feel that RWI would have been better if it had been delivered as a short burst and rather than being in it for S1 you were in it for a term and then back into your big class?

Cara: If I was in Sophie’s class I think I could do it with her there to help me but probably best whatever the teachers decide.

PDM: Do you think being involved in RWI has made you better at reading in other subjects?

Cara: Definitely.

PDM: And that’s why you felt confident enough to offer to read in Home Ec?

Cara: Yeah. Because if I wasn’t in RWI and I was still stuck like I was at primary I don’t think I could do it.

PDM: Do you think you’re a better reader now than you were at the end of P7?

Cara: Definitely. When the teacher talks about the different sounds you can hear that’s what I hear in every class.

PDM: Last question. Can you tell me any areas outside of school where you’ve been successful as a reader? Any aspect of your life where improving as a reader has been a good thing?

Cara: So on Instagram posts. In P7 I could hardly read any of it but now I can. Same with signs and posters. I can read them now.

PDM: That's a brilliant answer. I guess the success is that you can interact with your pals on Instagram. Improving as a reader has helped you access social media and has helped you feel part of that community? Really clever answer.

Cara: Yeah.

PDM: Last tiny thing. Do you ever talk about books with your friends?

Cara: I don't know. I tell them all the stuff I'm reading and what's going on because we aren't in the same classes.

PDM: Are you in their classes in other subjects outside of English?

Cara: Nope.

PDM: I remember how annoyed you were about that and to be fair you've really taken it in your stride.

Cara: It still hurts me because I hardly talk to anyone in my class. The teacher promised us we would be in the same class but it hasn't happened.

PDM: Thank you, (Cara). That has been really helpful for me.

Daniel Interview Transcript

PDM: Hi (Daniel). So, just as I explained earlier this is the combination of both interviews that we were going to do but couldn't due to lockdown. How have things been today?

Daniel: Good!

PDM: No hassles? Good stuff

PDM: So, we first met when you were at Primary school in P7 and you started on RWI when you came into S1. Tell us a bit about what you felt about that.

Daniel: I actually felt it was quite good and helpful.

PDM: Right, ok. So I want to try to unpick your reading habits and stuff like that and how reading at home is. Before you went onto RWI did you read at home?

Daniel: Not really.

PDM: Ok, and how about now? Would you say that it has changed? Do you try to read more stuff?

Daniel: I try to read a wee bit more.

PDM: Do people at home read?

Daniel: Only really my mum and my brother.

PDM: What kind of things do they read?

Pupil A: My brother likes action type stuff. My mum reads romance novel stuff.

PDM: Do you have conversations about books or TV programmes or films at home?

Pupil A: Yeah.

PDM: What do those kind of conversations look like? Who leads it or starts them off?

Daniel: Normally me!

PDM: What kind of stuff do you watch on TV?

Daniel: Like, The Hunger Games and things like that.

PDM: And does that ever make you feel like you want to read those books?

Daniel: Yeah.

PDM: And have you done that?

Daniel: No not really?

PDM: What do you think is stopping you?

Daniel: The length of them. The length of all the books.

PDM: It puts you off a wee bit. Ok.

PDM: When you think about those conversations, would you say that you have them more now than you used to or is it just the same?

Daniel: Just the same really.

PDM: OK, so prior to being involved in this intervention how would you describe yourself as a reader? Where would you place yourself – a great reader, just ok or not great at all?

Daniel: Not so great.

PDM: And what did that look like in class? How did you know that?

Daniel: Well, everyone else could be reading the full thing within a couple of minutes but it would take me 5 or ten minutes.

PDM: So really what you feel set you apart from other people was the length of time it took you to get through a text as opposed to the length of time it took others to get through a text.

PDM: So how did that work out in Primary? Did you do different work or did you go out of class to do different things?

Daniel: I had a mix of both.

PDM: I'm straying into other questions here but how did you feel doing the other work?

Daniel: Helpful and good.

PDM: So even though you weren't in with your pals and stuff it was better to be out doing something that was going to move you forward? OK.

PDM: We talked about how you placed yourself as maybe not being such a great reader. Would you say that has changed as a result of RWI? Where would you place yourself now?

Pupil A: I would say I'm an ok reader.

PDM: Would you say that RWI is, maybe, has it helped with the speed of your reading? Can you get through texts a wee bit more quickly?

Daniel: Yeah.

PDM: How would you describe yourself now on that same scale? A great reader, just ok or not great at all?

Daniel: Just ok.

PDM: How did you feel about taking part? When you were first asked about RWI how did that make you feel?

Daniel: Like, ok.

PDM: It didn't annoy you that none of your friends were there?

Daniel: Not really.

PDM: I wonder if that was maybe helped with the fact that it was all new at the start of secondary school and you didn't know any different anyway.

PDM: So see these people that you described as being good readers and you said that they were quick, is there anything else about their reading practices that was different to yours at the time?

Daniel: No, not really.

PDM: So they were quicker but did they try to read more difficult books?

Daniel: Yeah.

PDM: So, again, what was your feeling about yourself at that point? How did it make you feel seeing them read books that you may have wanted to read but you were left reading other material?

Daniel: Just wanted to try to get up to their level.

PDM: That's interesting. So was it maybe quite motivational?

Daniel: Yeah.

PDM: Now that we're at the end of RWI how do you feel about it?

Daniel: Good. I think it has made a difference.

PDM: The texts that other people were reading that you mentioned a couple of minutes ago. Do you see yourself picking up those kind of books in the future?

Daniel: Yeah. I'd like to.

PDM: What is it that makes you think you'll do that? Do you just feel more confident?

Daniel: Yeah.

PDM: If I can go back to the section about how you felt. You've done lots of tests on your reading. How do you feel about them?

Daniel: Good.

PDM: Do they make you feel like you're making progress?

Daniel: Yeah definitely.

PDM: If I think about RWI again. How did it change you as a reader?

Daniel: It just helped me with being able to write down the words to try to figure it out.

PDM: So it was really about the mechanics of reading. Would you say that you like reading now? If you went home tonight would you read a book?

Daniel: I'd try to read but I'd probably want to do something else.

PDM: What sort of things get in the way?

Daniel: Just like if I have football training. Sometimes I just want to talk to my friends.

PDM: Do you find that since coming to secondary you have less time?

Daniel: Yeah.

PDM: What is it that gives you less time?

Daniel: Like all of the home work from different classes.

PDM: Where do you get the most homework?

Daniel: Normally maths and science.

PDM: Going a little off topic but what does your homework in science look like? What do you do?

Daniel: Just doing revision of what we've covered in class.

PDM: When you say revision what do you mean by that? What are you being asked to do to revise?

Daniel: It's just questions on what we've done in class.

PDM: And do you get a passage to read and then answer or is it just from memory?

Daniel: Just from memory but sometimes you'll get a picture or a passage.

PDM: So how do you feel then? Are you happier with the picture or with the passage?

Daniel: The picture.

PDM: Do you find that easier to get meaning from?

Daniel: Yeah.

PDM: So, do you ever not do your science homework?

Daniel: Yeah. I struggle sometimes.

PDM: Makes sense when you think about it like that doesn't it? I know you quite well and I would say you're not a "don't do homework" type of guy. I'll bet you always do the homework when you have a picture or diagram.

Daniel: Yeah.

PDM: Here's another question that's a bit off topic – have you ever picked up a demerit for not doing your science homework?

Daniel: Yeah.

PDM: Do those demerits come regularly?

Daniel: Just really when it's that type of homework.

PDM: Has there ever been any sort of attempt to always give you a diagram along with text or do you just get the same work as the rest of the class?

Daniel: I just get the same level of work.

PDM: Right, ok. I just want to think about whether what you've been doing with RWI has helped your reading in English and has it helped your reading in other areas of the school?

Daniel: Yeah.

PDM: So, tell me what that looks like. How do you know that you're getting better in other subjects.

Daniel: I'm just able to read bigger words and able to recognise them.

PDM: So, I guess the thing coming through from RWI is that it's giving you strategies. Things to do when you come across words that you don't know. I know from your reading that when you know the words you read it automatically but when you don't you either miss it out or stop completely. So, if it helps you overcome words you'd normally miss out it will improve your understanding overall.

PDM: Last question. Do you think there are any areas outside of school that you can pinpoint as being a success for you as a reader? Even talking to friends about books or it has got me interested in something new.

Daniel: Not that I can think of.

PDM: What was the last thing you read at home?

Daniel: I think it was something to do with Merlin.

PDM: What was that book like?

Daniel: It was good.

PDM: was it easy, difficult ...

Daniel: Easy. Because it was one of the books that was made for dyslexia.

PDM: I'm always a bit unsure with them. Do you find that you like those books?

Daniel: Yeah.

PDM: I guess what I'm trying to get at is do they make you feel any different?

Daniel: No.

PDM: Ok – that was excellent. Thank you very much.

Daniel: You're welcome.

Erin Interview Transcript

PDM: Morning Erin. So, we're going to carry out the interview we discussed. So how have things been since you came back to school?

Erin: Good. Ok.

PDM: Ok, cool. What subject are you in just now – Spanish or French?

Erin: Spanish.

PDM: Do you quite like Spanish?

Erin: Yeah.

PDM: Ok, so obviously I explained to you we'd just carry out the one interview and I want to know about how you felt before and how you felt after being involved in the Reading Club (pizza and pages).

PDM: So before you were involved in the Reading Club did you read at home?

Erin: Yeah.

PDM: How often would you say?

Erin: About once a week or something like that.

PDM: Good! And what about your parents - do they read at home?

Erin: Yeah – my mum reads about a book a month.

PDM: Great. So in your house there was a culture of reading you would say?

Erin: Yeah.

PDM: Would you say that you read at home more now than you used to?

Erin: Yeah.

PDM: Ok.

Erin: In reading club it helped me to like books more than you did before so I like to read now.

PDM: Right, ok. What do you think it is we were doing that helped you?

Erin: I think it was after you finished reading the book you got a chance to explain what happened. To explain about everything and talk about the book.

PDM: I can see that. In Reading Club we had about 10-15 people and the big space in the library and you can spread out. Do you think it helped, like, the conversations you had with teachers and other pupils?

Erin: Yes because if they've read the book before you and you make a mistake or something they can help you.

PDM: Thinking again about home, do you talk about books there?

Erin: Well me and my sister do because she likes to read. I help her when she wants to read.

PDM: That's good. Do you talk about, as a family, films and TV programmes at all?

Erin: Yeah. Usually we talk about films we watch and my dad will be like "you should read the book, it's better."

PDM: That's good isn't it? Making the connection between the book and the film.

PDM: Ok. Last question on that then. How do you feel about those conversations now that you've been involved in Reading Club for a year?

Erin: I understand more what they're talking about. I wasn't really into books before reading club but now I understand what they mean when they say you should read the book first.

PDM: Ok. I want to try to get an idea of how you felt about yourself as a reader before we started and how you felt afterwards. I guess what I'm thinking about is would you say you were good, not great, just ok and what is maybe different now?

Erin: Every time I read a book before I would always get distracted but in reading club it is always nice and quiet. Now I'd say I'm better because I don't get distracted a lot because I have good books.

PDM: Ok. Can I touch on that again? Tell me a bit more about “good books”?

Erin: So, like, they have ... the books they give you. I don't know how to explain it.

PDM: So one of the things about Reading Club is that we ask you what you want to read and then we go and buy it so was that helpful?

Erin: Yeah. Because I wanted to get a book on Riverdale before and I got that. And I'm reading that now actually.

PDM: Are you reading it again?

Erin: No I'm almost finished it. I have two chapters left.

PDM: And again you're making that connection to other types of media. You've seen the Netflix series but you're also then interested in reading the book.

PDM: So how would you have described yourself as a reader before this?

Erin: Not so good.

PDM: And what about afterwards?

Erin: I'd say I'm in the middle.

PDM: That's good. It shows progress and suggests that you're getting better and that's maybe what you wanted out of it.

PDM: So, thinking about your experience in school and assessments and things like that, how do you know what kind of reader you are? You said you weren't very good so what was it that told you that?

Erin: Some of the words in the books took me a while to figure out. When I was reading a sentence in my head it took me a while to read the sentence out. Some of the books I picked were quite hard to read but now I look back and realise they were easy.

PDM: Right, ok.

Erin: I wasn't great at reading before ... I can't explain it.

PDM: This is a really simplistic way to think about it but Reading Club maybe gave you the chance to do more reading and doing more reading improved you. That improvement sort of mushrooms and now those books that you thought were hard now look easy.

PDM: Probably nothing to do with this interview but you're talking about difficult words. Did you have strategies to figure out what those new word were?

Erin: Yeah I would split them up.

PDM: Like the metalinguistics strategy?

Erin: I knew what they meant but I couldn't figure out how to say them but I'd split them down.

PDM: So if you're saying that you weren't really a great reader at that point, could you see a difference between what your reading habits and practices were as a reader and those people in your class that you thought were good readers. What did you think were the differences?

Erin: Well they would all finish books before me and I was still on my first one. They were all really good at reading and I'd be stuck on a chapter.

PDM: Did you notice any differences in the type of books that you read?

Erin: Yeah. They were reading non-fiction, and I was as well, but theirs were all action.

PDM: How did that make you feel?

Erin: It made me feel ok but I just felt it pushed me to read a bit quicker.

PDM: So being in among better readers was quite motivational.

Erin: Yeah. It made me want to get better at reading and then when I heard about reading club my mum said I should join that.

PDM: And what about now? Do you think that your reading practices are closer to theirs?

Erin: Yeah. I can read a lot quicker now.

PDM: Ok so when we floated the idea of reading club how did you feel about taking part?

Erin: Well at first I was a bit unsure but when I went in and saw people I was ok. It was nice to see other people there.

PDM: Yeah it's a good thing to do at the start of 1st year. It kind of gets you known to other people and it probably helped that some of your friends went along too. When we're talking about good readers some of those S2 pupils involved gave you a model to look at outside of the classroom.

PDM: How did you feel about Reading Club after the intervention? Even now that you're in S2 would you still go along?

Erin: Yeah. I liked it a lot. Probably.

PDM: Brilliant! OK so do you think it is important to continue to improve as a reader?

Erin: Yeah. So like for a job in the future you need to know how to read. But it also helps you with English and other subjects in school.

PDM: Well that brings me neatly on to my next question. Do you think it has improved how you get on in other subjects? It should have an impact on your performance elsewhere. You mentioned those pupils who were reading non-fiction elsewhere and I suppose that's what you read everywhere but English. It shows you can transfer your reading ability to other areas of learning and can see the benefit of it.

Erin: Yeah it does.

PDM: Last question then. Can you think of any areas outside of school where you were successful as a reader?

Erin: Probably at Guides.

PDM: Tell me about that then.

Erin: Well they were all older than me and some of them bring books in and I thought they looked good. So they told me about it and when I go to book shops now I'm looking at what they showed me.

PDM: that's good. That's your identity as a reader and feeling confident to talk to those older girls about what they're reading and taking an influence from them and seeing out new stuff. That really is a success outside of school.

PDM: Do you think that has improved again since you've been involved in Reading Club?

Erin: Yeah I would say I do it more often and I feel confident talking about books with older friends.

PDM: So the reading is feeding the friendships in some ways?

Erin: Yeah.

PDM: Erin, thank you very much. That's brilliant. I feel like I have a good picture of where you were and where you are now.

Erin: Thanks!

Fern Interview Transcript

PDM: So, good morning, (Fern).

Fern: Good Morning.

PDM: I was going to say tell me one good thing that's happened in school today but obviously we've just done a test so that's not a good thing! But what else is happening that has been good?

Fern: Yeah. I kind of missed all my pals and stuff like that.

PDM: Ok, cool. Right ok. So what we're doing this morning is just to get an idea of how you felt about the after school reading club you were involved in. We'll look at how you felt before it, look at how you felt about yourself after it. That's what these questions are set up to do.

PDM: So, before we were involved with reading ambassadors did you read at home?

Fern: No.

PDM: Didn't at all? Ok. And what about at home? Did people in the house read?

Fern: My mum reads but no one else really does.

PDM: Right, ok. What kind of books does your mum read?

Fern: Crime novels.

PDM: See like you personally then – and this is a bit of a daft question in some ways but it's just to sort of build up a picture – what would you say, how many books did you have at home that were yours?

Fern: At home? That were mine? I had one.

PDM: What was it?

Fern: It was about this elf and this fairy. I've had it since I was in primary 6.

PDM: Right, ok. Did you quite like it?

Fern: Yeah it was quite nice.

PDM: Ok, cool. And then I guess I just want to say, like since you've become involved in the after school reading club, have you bought more books?

Fern: I now have a bookshelf. (Pupil's tone expressed their happiness/ satisfaction with this.)

PDM: What kind of books do you pick up? What sort of stuff do you like?

Fern: Well, I have a lot of like, Disney ones. I've got 2 crime ones, loads of fictional ones, I have one on history – I quite like history – and I have one on saving the planet.

PDM: What would you say is your favourite? What do you like most?

Fern: The Disney ones.

PDM: Those twisted tale ones? They come out all the time. There are always different ones popping out.

PDM: Ok. At home, now that you do read, do you talk about books?

Fern: Yeah.

PDM: What do you talk about? What sort of conversations do you have?

Fern: Well, right now I'm in the middle of reading 'Icarus' Children' – amazing book – cult story and all that. So me and my mum sit and talk about that. She'll ask "What happened in the book today?" and I'll tell her.

PDM: What other things do you talk about? Do you talk about TV programmes? Yeah? And did you do that beforehand?

Fern: Yeah. Me and my mum sit and binge watch TV shows and movies.

PDM: So that's good. The conversation was already in place, it's just that now it has shifted to include talking about books. That's good.

PDM: Ok. So here is another question then. I guess that now you would say you read often when you didn't read before?

Fern: Yeah.

PDM: Ok. So, before we did this, before you were involved in the after school, reading club, how did you feel about yourself? How would you describe yourself as a reader?

Fern: (laughs) Oh terrible! Hated reading. Hated anything to do with reading. Any time I got a book at school I hated it.

PDM: And you mentioned that this morning about the reading aloud thing. Was that what put you off? You associated reading with reading aloud, therefore the two things, even though they're kind of separate, they were both chucked away?

Fern: Yeah

PDM: And what about now?

Fern: I love reading. I don't read out loud because I just don't feel comfortable doing that but I do like reading in English and even performing in drama. When we go to the Fort, I go to the bookshop and buy a book or order one online.

PDM: So let's think back to before the intervention. To describe yourself as a reader would you say you were brilliant, just ok or not very good at all?

Fern: (Laughs) Oh! Terrible!

PDM: For all the reasons that you said? And how did you that make you feel compared to other people in your class?

Fern: I hated it. I felt so different. Even in primary school I used to be not even able to read with the class. I used to be in a group of 5 and we were given the wee thin books. The rest of the class were reading big thick books and we just felt so out of place and so different. Now I don't feel that way as we are all the same.

PDM: Ok. So how would you describe yourself as a reader now?

Fern: I'm ok.

PDM: No one ever says really good, and I'll bet you are really good!

Fern: I'm pretty good at reading!

PDM: So, Here's a question. How do you know what kind of reader you are?

Fern: I don't know.

PDM: You've probably actually touched on this already but how did you know back in primary?

Fern: Because when I was in Primary 3 I used to be in the high groups and then we started realising that I was reading differently from everybody else. My reading out loud and reading in my head and my comprehension just wasn't the same as everyone else. My reading aloud was all the way down there (low) but by comprehension was all the way up there (high). So I was put into a low group which made me think I was a bad reader. In Primary 7 I got my test done which made me realise I'm not a bad reader. It's just something that I can't read like everybody else if you know what I mean? Got to S1 and realised I can read what I want – it just takes me a bit of time. I just couldn't read big books so I thought I was bad.

PDM: So I guess in some ways, has the work that we get you to do – and I suppose going to reading club helped this as well – reading the same sort of things as everyone else has made you feel better about yourself as a reader.

Fern: Yeah.

PDM: Ok. Good.

PDM: So, when we spoke to you about taking part in this, how did you feel?

Fern: Honestly, I wasn't too confident in it. Other people in the group, like Pierce, love to read and love reading aloud. The fact that you said we could talk about it (what we read) after. But then Mrs Mullen said that she would read the same book as me to help me with it. So there were three of us – me, Sara and Mrs Mullen – and we use to read the same book and take turns reading a page. So when I was stuck on something or Sara was stuck on something she could talk us through it which made me want to do it more.

PDM: That's good. So almost having that reassurance there helped you. I think the other thing as well, did you talk about what you were reading – not how do I read that but the ideas behind it?

Fern: Yeah.

PDM: That's quite a good support too, isn't it?

Fern: Yeah.

PDM: And afterwards, I guess, how do you feel about Reading Club now?

Fern: Love it. I'd go back.

PDM: As soon as we can. We even talked the other day about using lunch times rather than after school. Definitely something on the cards as soon as we get the go ahead.

PDM: Ok. What did the intervention do for you as a reader? What did it ...

Fern: I think it just made me more confident, to be fair. I'm a lot more confident than what I was in myself.

PDM: Did it change the way you saw yourself as a reader and therefore you were happy to do it?

Fern: Yeah.

PDM: Ok. And would you say you get some enjoyment out of that?

Fern: Yeah.

PDM: Good.

PDM: Here's a question. You've obviously improved. Do you think it is important to continue to improve?

Fern: Definitely. Because my English teacher keeps on talking about how in 2 years we have Nat 5s and its reading comprehension and its reading a paragraph and rewriting it and I'm like, I'm going to need to work hard to be able to do all this and be able to get to where I want to be in the future. So I think I do need to continue to improve my reading.

PDM: And do you think that the stuff we've done has helped you in other subject areas? You do a lot of reading elsewhere in the school so has reading club helped your reading in science etc?

Fern: Yeah.

PDM: How do you know that?

Fern: well when I used to read something in RE, I used to just read the word. I didn't think about there being something behind it or there being more to the story. When I do I think there's more to be said about this if you know what I mean?

PDM: Last question. Can you tell me any areas outside of school where you are successful as a reader? Take learning out of it. Has it been useful socially or from a friendships point of view? Is there something you do now that you didn't before and the reason is the reading club?

Fern: Well, I've done opera since I was in P6 but I never got a main part because I struggled with reading. But this year I have a main part with lines. I think reading club helped a lot with that to be fair.

PDM: That's brilliant. And you think that was the difference? I guess it's just overall confidence.

Fern: (Agrees)

PDM: Ok that's great. Thanks very much for all of your help.

Appendix Six – Frequency of utterances related to power, access and belonging

Reading Ambassadors: Summary of Evidence related to codes

Theme	Code	Number
Power	Power over Institution	4
	Power over Curriculum	11
	Power over Progress	4
Access	Access to Texts	8
	Access to Valued Domains	8
	Access to Conversations	4
Belonging	Belonging to Institution	2
	Belonging to Peer Group	10

Read, Write Inc: Summary of evidence related to codes

Theme	Code	Number
Power	Power over Institution	2
	Power over Curriculum	6
	Power over Progress	13
Access	Access to Texts	6
	Access to Valued Domains	6
	Access to Conversations	3
Belonging	Belonging to Institution	2
	Belonging to Peer Group	15

After School Reading Club: Summary of evidence related to codes

Theme	Code	Number
Power	Power over Institution	3
	Power over Curriculum	4

	Power over Progress	5
Access	Access to Texts	7
	Access to Valued Domains	10
	Access to Conversations	3
Belonging	Belonging to Institution	2
	Belonging to Peer Group	11

Appendix Seven: Mapping perceived improvement to intersecting areas of the Three Domains Model

Reading Ambassadors		
Domain	Evidence	Perceived Improvement in context of Three Domains Tool
Cognitive Knowledge and Skills	Andrew: Yeah. I would say I can understand passages much more clearly now.	Andrew’s perceived improvement lies in his belief that he has a better understanding of the texts he reads. This may make him feel positive about his personal and social identity. Bree’s perceived improvement lies in the improved cultural and social capital she deploys when talking about texts. This also drives improvement in cognitive knowledge and skills.
Personal and Social Identity	Andrew: I read before but it made me more confident and made me realise things more when I was reading	
Cultural and Social Capital	Bree: I liked that I had something to read, and I liked having someone to talk to about it.	
Read Write Inc: Fresh Start		
Domain	Evidence	Perceived Improvement in context of Three Domains Tool
Cognitive Knowledge and Skills	Cara: It’s like there are certain words I get stuck with but the words I’ve seen before I’m ok and I know them.	Cara’s perceived improvement lies in cognitive knowledge and skills where she feels confident in recognising new vocabulary. This also positively builds her personal and social identity as she feels more positive about herself as a reader. Daniel ties the cognitive knowledge and skills domain together with personal and social identity as his desire is to improve as a reader to compare more favourably with his peers.
Personal and Social Identity	Daniel: Just wanted to try to get up to their level.	
Cultural and Social Capital	Cara: It still hurts me because I hardly talk to anyone in my class. The teacher promised us we would be in the same class, but it hasn’t happened.	
The After School Reading Club		
Domain	Evidence	Perceived Improvement in context of Three Domains Tool
Cognitive Knowledge and Skills	Fern: My reading aloud was all the way down there (low)	Fern’s perceived improvement lies in her belief that even although her cognitive

	but by comprehension was all the way up there (high).	<p>knowledge and skills are not where she wants them to be she recognises her assets as a reader and maintains a positive personal and social identity.</p> <p>Erin also equates improvement in reading to personal and social identity and her desire to improve.</p>
Personal and Social Identity	Erin: Yeah. It made me want to get better at reading and then when I heard about reading club my mum said I should join that.	
Cultural and Social Capital	Fern: Because my English teacher keeps on talking about how in 2 years we have Nat 5s and its reading comprehension and its reading a paragraph and rewriting it and I'm like, I'm going to need to work hard to be able to do all this and be able to get to where I want to be in the future.	

