



Reading Solutions <sup>UK</sup>

# Reading SATs EXS increases 33% in one year thanks to Reading Plus at Sunnyside Spencer Academy

Verity Lee, Year 6 Teacher and Assistant Head at Sunnyside Spencer Academy discusses how Reading Plus improved pupils' fluency and comprehension, boosted engagement, and increased SATs results.

"Our school motto is Making Every Moment Count and Reading Plus allows us to do this."

## Why were you looking for a reading solution?

We were looking for a programme that allowed pupils to develop more independence with reading. We wanted something that would improve their fluency as often they do not reach the final text in the reading SATs tests.

Due to working in a disadvantaged area, pupils lack a varied understanding of vocabulary which impacts their comprehension. We also wanted a programme that allowed pupils to build a variety of experiences through texts, such as learning about, "Amazing Moths" or reading a traditional story. The pupils also needed to develop skills such as skimming and scanning and re-reading texts to search for evidence.

## How has reading engagement changed since using Reading Plus?

Budget restraints in school means that children don't have a wealth of books to read. Although pupils did read at home, they would often have the same text for a long period of time and they could not confidently talk about what they had read and lacked motivation to read.

Reading Plus allows children to access a vast range of texts as the programme has over 1000 fiction, non-fiction, and informational texts, and can be accessed from home. The pupils enjoy talking about what they've read with their teachers and peers.

I particularly like that Reading Plus motivates our boys to read more. They are competitive, and they want to see their scores after answering each comprehension question.



## Clear assessments and data

The initial assessment pupils sit when they first start on the programme gives us baseline data and makes it clear which pupils need to focus on fluency or comprehension. We found that pupils may have high fluency but low comprehension.

The nature of the programme and features such as the Guided Window encourage pupils to pace themselves, not rush and refer back to the text if they are unsure so that they can comprehend what they are reading. Using Reading Plus, pupils can now independently make a point, find the evidence, and explain without any adult support.

The data is very clear. It can be downloaded and discussed during phase meetings. Leaders can hold other teachers to account. Reading Plus makes it clear who I need to support and who I need to challenge. As a year 6 teacher it can be a challenge to listen to 1:1 readers each day but Reading Plus allows me to clearly see their progress and if they need intervention support.

## Accelerating catch-up

In 2019, our reading results for Year 6 were EXS 63% and GDS 13%. After using the programme, our recent SATs results increased to 86% EXS and 41% GDS.

“Our Y5 class have shown the most progress. Prior to using Reading Plus only 19% of the class were reading at their correct reading age. After one years use, 70% of the class are now reading at, or above, their reading age.

Used as specified, in one-year pupils make an average of 2.6 level comprehension years in gains on Reading Plus. At Sunnyside, 71% of pupils made 2.6 gains or more, two pupils gained 6.6, and one pupil progressed 7. The average reading speed of pupils has increased 42% to 200 words per minute (wpm) (the national average for Y5 is 175wpm).

## Do your pupils enjoy using the programme?

Here's what a few had to say:

“I enjoy Reading Plus because it is fun and I select the text myself. I love learning the facts from the books. For example, I learnt there are more moths than butterflies. I think the vocabulary section is fun and is helping me learn more words that I can use.” Riley

“I love Reading Plus because it has a variety of different texts. It helps me understand what I am reading. I enjoy keeping track of my score because I am very competitive.” Kiernan

“I like the Guided Window because it helps me read at a steady pace rather than too fast or too slow.” Holly

**“I couldn't imagine not having access to Reading Plus.”**

Reading Plus is not a replacement for reading lessons, but it does allow pupils to apply their newly learnt skills independently. The Skills Feature provides intervention materials such as PDFs and lesson plans, saving time when planning and supporting staff with the scripts to ensure high-quality teaching.

Thanks to Reading Plus, pupils have developed a love of reading. They love finding out more, and at the end of each lesson or during a spare 5 minutes, they ask to go on Reading Plus – Making Every Moment Count.