

What on Earth! Magazine

whatonearth.co.uk



The Open
University



READING
FOR PLEASURE

A project to further investigate how What On Earth! magazine is able - with little or no assistance - to engage children in reading. This work will have a particular focus on reluctant readers, and will explore if, how and in what ways the magazine inspires and guides them towards becoming children that read for pleasure, thereby helping to build a life-long love of learning.

Will you join us?

What On Earth! magazine is delighted that the planning for Phase 2 of the study led by Professor Teresa Cremin of the Open University and working with What On Earth! magazine, the fastest growing non-fiction magazine for children age 7 – 14, has now been completed and we are jointly ready to invite around 12 schools to participate in a ground breaking study.

Over a period of 12 weeks, commencing September 2024, more than 500 children will be monitored as they read and engage with the magazine in a controlled trial, the results of which will be published in February 2025.

The children will be separated according to classes and a single school can apply to have two classes in the study. The children must be in Year 5 at the start of the study. Clusters will be formed consisting of three or four schools.

The children will be randomly divided (in class groups) and allocated into one of the three clusters – approximately 180 children in each.

- **Cluster 1 – Formalised use of magazine in lesson time.** A set time of approximately 30 minutes each week for pupils to read the magazine. There must be teacher stimulated ‘talk’ with the introduction of a weekly ‘magazine moment’ – a short teacher led dive into one of the articles
- **Cluster 2 – Casual, pupil choice-led use of magazine.** There will be no specifically allocated magazine ‘time’ each week. The magazine is to be available for at least 30 minutes each week for choice-led reading time. There should be no explicit, teacher-stimulated or initiated talk but interactions may arise organically from pupils’ own interests and should be encouraged
- **Cluster 3 – Control group.** There is to be no access to magazine until the term commencing after Christmas. Data will still be collected during the period September to December to understand changes in reading habits without magazine access. This cluster will go on in the new year to receive the magazine along with additional teacher support and resources, but without any further data collection.

Participation in the study is conditional on agreement to facilitate all data collection which will take place before, during and after the study period. This will include:

- **Media release, parental and school permission** - prior to start
- **Pupil surveys** – Entry (Sept 2024) and Exit (Dec 2024)
- **Family surveys** – Entry (Sept 2024) and Exit (Dec 2024)
- **Teacher surveys** – Entry (Sept 2024) and Exit (Dec 2024)
- **Pupil focus groups** - These will take place initially in Week 6 and are then repeated in Week 12 of the study. Lasting 20 minutes each, these will involve schools in Cluster 1 and Cluster 2. 24 pupils will be selected from each Cluster to represent all the schools in the Cluster. The focus groups for each Cluster will be conducted as 4 sets of six children in live meets and/or online meets. They will be recorded for transcription. There are no focus groups for Cluster 3
- **Teacher interviews** – These take place both in Week 6 and Week 12. With a 15 minute duration these interviews will be recorded and transcribed. Every class in Cluster 1 and Cluster 2 will be represented by one or two teachers. There are no teacher interviews for Cluster 3. The interviews may take place through either live or online meet.
- **Headteacher comments** – Entry (Sept 2024) and Exit (Dec 2024) gathered via short interview.

Wherever possible, forms and surveys will be online, and it will be the responsibility of the teacher and the school to ensure they are completed according to the timetable. If a school is unable to meet the timetable for return of documents, they may be asked to withdraw from the study.

Reading is a fundamental skill that is central to the wellbeing of the individual and to the betterment of society as a whole. For some children it is an easy and smooth progression, but for many it is a journey that is fraught with obstacles. Creating a culture of reading through choice and offering Individuals the opportunity to follow their interests is the best way to navigate around these obstacles and to support each child with their own personal development.

By participating in the study you will be providing an exceptional opportunity for your pupils to be encouraged in reading for pleasure and you will be helping them to develop and move towards becoming lifelong lovers of learning.

The schools that will participate will all be welcomed as part of the What On Earth Magazine family. The schools will be fully supported in the study and, in addition to the schedule below, will receive support visits and calls as the study progresses.

Every participating school will receive:

- Four issues of the What On Earth Magazine for every child that is participating PLUS further copies of each issue for the teachers involved and headteacher.

- A ticket or tickets to the OU RfP conference in June for our welcome event where you can meet the other schools and meet the OU team.
- A July online launch event with the OU and WoE magazine team. This is an opportunity to discuss the study, share thoughts, clarify any finer detail such as focus group participants, and celebrate the start of the study.
- A September CPD online event run by the OU that will focus on the benefits of RfP; clarifying RfP pedagogy; Intro TaRs; Selecting ‘spotlight’ pupils.
- A WhatsApp group for quick questions, thoughts and ideas.
- 24/7 access directly to John Gordon-Reid, the Project Manager.

To apply, please fill in this straightforward form [CLICK HERE](#).

The deadline for applications to be part of the study is Wednesday 29 May and schools will be informed during the following week if they have been successful.

There has already been strong interest in this exciting study and it is possible that not all schools that would like to participate will be able to be accommodated.

OUTLINE TIMEFRAME

29 May	Deadline for recruiting of schools
31 May	Participants advised
15 June	Welcome event at the OPU RfP event in Milton Keynes. Tickets paid for by WOE magazine
July – date tbc	Online welcome and launch event
September – date tbc	Online cpd event
September – approx. 10 days after term starts	Launch in class

Please do not hesitate to contact John Gordon-Reid on 07881 922154 or email john@whatonearth.co.uk if you have any questions.



REMEMBER THE DEADLINE FOR APPLYING IS 29th MAY!