

Impact Report

May 2024



Literacy Tree



A word from our CEOs



Anthony Legon



Lynn Sear

We met back in 2009 when working for an Inner London Local Authority school improvement team. We kept hitting the same pain-point when trying to find resources we could recommend to teachers. There was no singular resource that effectively met schools' needs in engaging children with high-quality literature, meeting National Curriculum requirements, and supporting teachers in lesson delivery and assessment. Literacy Tree was born out of this.

Literacy Tree has evolved enormously as an organisation from the consultancy we founded in 2012, but our mission remains the same. Since our creation we have had a mission to empower educators with a high-quality comprehensive book-based approach. Our call to action is 'Transform your literacy through literature' and we now know how transformative and powerful our pedagogy can be. We see engaging children to be informed writers and critical readers as vital work.

As our community has grown, we have been able to rise to the challenges in education with a cohesive set of messages that have been evidence-informed. The informal gathering of success stories and hundreds of work samples on our platform has helped us identify what has been working well and we pride ourselves on responding to the needs of our schools. Continuing pressures on our schools mean we have to maintain our imperative to help leaders to anticipate the road ahead.

We have known for some time that we need to think more deeply about our impact. In the academic year 2022/23 we worked with over 300 schools in a consultancy or training capacity, exploring with them best practice in primary literacy, looking at book choices, pedagogy and subject knowledge. Over 1000 school members have joined our community, and we now have 40,000 individual members who come from over 100 countries.

Presenting our inaugural Impact Report, we celebrate reaching significant milestones by providing an unfiltered evaluation of our progress towards our objectives. This report candidly showcases our successes and areas for improvement as we strive to amplify our impact in alignment with our strategic goals. We invite you to delve into the journey of our 12-year-old organisation. We hope it offers an insight into our hard work, joys and successes.

A Legon L Sear



“ Literacy Tree plans pitched us headlong into a new immersive approach. It helped us grab the children’s imaginations and curiosity. It gave them a chance to explore and to accumulate skills and learning.

The results, both in terms of what the children told us and what we saw in books was immediate. Pride in work, an appetite to use new effects, a fresh motivation to reach different audiences, an understanding of the nuts and bolts of grammar: we saw this grow week on week, term on term from that very first year.”

Headteacher, Barrow Hill Junior School, Westminster

Introduction

Literacy Tree's **Teach Through a Text** approach is based on evidence, experience and practice. Our team of consultants have designed Literacy Tree's book-based resources to help children engage deeply and spark curiosity. This resonance was a common thread in our 2024 Members Survey where 93% of teachers told us that engagement and curiosity has increased since adopting Literacy Tree.

Through a diverse range of carefully chosen books we provide a comprehensive and complete offer, and in recent years we have increased our offer from Writing resources to Reading, Spelling and Home Learning - all with the book as the driver. Making **authentic choices** is a core value and so the books chosen by our team are all quality texts without any affiliation to a particular publisher or author.

Created by Teachers for Teachers



This range is ambitious and is designed to build a literary repertoire. Since 2022 we have drawn upon the expertise of our Teacher Advisory Panels for Race and Cultures, LGBTQIA+ and SEND and Neuro-divergence.

We launched the **Literacy Tree App** in 2023 and made it free for everyone. We now have over 133,000 users and the App was shortlisted in multiple categories at the Bett and ERA Awards in 2024.

Goals

“We want children to have access to diverse high quality literature in their classrooms, and to equip teachers to unlock the magic in these texts, whilst ensuring all National Curriculum objectives have authentic points of application.”

– Founders Lynn & Anthony



- ✓ **Comprehensive Platform:** A complete, book-based platform designed for primary schools, covering all aspects of the Primary English curriculum with high quality training as apart of the offer.
- ✓ **Flexible Usage:** Can serve as a complete scheme of work or an adaptable framework to suit the specific needs of schools.
- ✓ **Curated Literature:** We carefully selects significant and important children's literature to create original resources.
- ✓ **Literary Repertoire:** Our resources guide children through entire books, supporting them to be critical readers.
- ✓ **Overarching Literary Themes:** Literary Themes act as a tree canopy, providing a structured framework for making deeper connections across subjects and themes. These are outlined in all of our Curriculum Maps.

Our Pedagogy

The Teach Through a Text approach is informed by experience. It is the backbone and cohesion to our resources.

Thematic link

Links are made through themes & conventions within significant literature

Discovery Point

Dramatic conventions support immersion & create a hook with the book to create resonance

Embedded comprehension

Reading comprehension explicitly embedded through prediction and inference

Embedded grammar

Explicit grammar skills for writing taught in context to be applied purposefully

Spelling & vocabulary

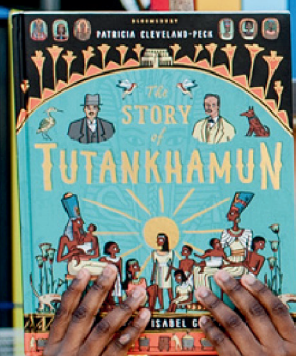
Explicit spelling skills are explored and linked to vocabulary acquisition

Literary language

Literary language explicitly taught and applied in writing

Purpose & audience

Distinct shorter & longer writing opportunities rather than genre-led



We use high-quality children’s literature to:

- Create a strong sense of **audience and purpose** that fosters motivation in writing
- Provide frequent **meaningful practice opportunities** for writing that develop confidence, motivation and stamina
- Provide an **engaging context** for the embedded teaching of writing conventions that leads to robust and flexible knowledge

Literacy Tree is underpinned by a range of factors supported by research that provide evidence of a likely impact on attainment.

Motivation has been identified as a factor that is ‘correlated strongly both with pupils’ attitudes to writing and their skill as writers’ (Ofsted, 2022).

We use a range of mechanisms to foster motivation for writing, for example by engaging children in high-quality children’s literature to provide contexts for writing, by providing children with meaningful opportunities to engage in process drama, debate and discussion.

The explicit teaching of writing conventions in the context of creative writing has been identified as a key characteristic of programmes that produce good writing outcomes (Slavin et. al, 2019).

The explicit teaching of grammar is embedded across our resources in a way that links to the **engaging context** of the text and to the **purpose and audience**. This provides meaningful motivation for children to attend to.

The recently published English education subject report (Ofsted, 2024) states that ‘Schools teach grammar, sentence structure and punctuation explicitly. However, pupils do not always get enough practice to secure this knowledge’. Meaningful opportunities to practise using grammar, sentence structure and punctuation are embedded across all of our resources.

Our Timeline

2012

Literacy Tree
Founded

2013

Recruited our first
consultant

2015

Reached 100 school
memberships

2014

Launched first
subscription service

2016

First International
School

2017

Literary Curriculum
platform launched

2019

Moved into training
space & offices

2018

Launched RATE

2020

Learning Logs &
Branches launched
for home learners

2021

Took training offer
online

2023

'Literacy Tree' born,
app launched &
1000 member
schools

2022

BETT Award &
Teach Primary
Winner



2024

Finalists for 4 BETT awards & 2 ERA Awards.
Used in 96 countries.

Our Offering

Writing Roots

Book-based planning sequences, which embed complete curriculum coverage and engage children to write with clear audience & purpose.

Literary Leaves

Sequenced activities that take children through whole books to teach reading comprehension and create critical readers. Literary Leaves use novels, poetry collections & high-quality, non-fiction books that connect to the Writing Roots through Literary Themes.

Spelling Seeds

Sequences for teaching spelling and vocabulary in context, through investigation and at the point of application. These complement Writing Roots and use the same texts to provide further short writing opportunities.

Online Training & Support

Our literacy consultants provide regular planning surgeries, Teach Through a Text training plus extra support for English Subject Leaders.

Teacher Toolkit

A range of resources and worksheets to help teachers with their planning and support activities in the classroom.

Home Learning Branches

Cover some of our favourite texts and contain writing, reading comprehension, spelling, vocabulary and further reading opportunities. Many schools use these for homework.



Work Samples

A space to share children's work, working walls and displays with the Literacy Tree network.



Literacy Tree App

Allows teachers to annotate and adapt plans to personalise them for their classes, capture children's work (and tag it to individual or groups of children) and assess children's reading and writing (and link their captured work to each assessment).



Our Reach



1000+
member schools

100+
countries

40,000+
users

MATs

Independent

International

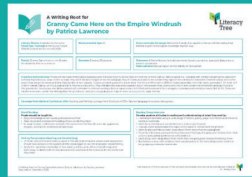
SEND

*Number of MATs/Trusts using us their preferred approach trust-wide has doubled in 2023/24.

** Pins indicate member schools



Now with Mixed Age Suggestions



A Writing Root for Granny Came Here on the Empire Windrush

KS: Lower KS2
Year Group: Year 4

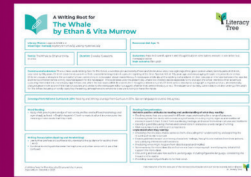
Now with Mixed Age Suggestions



A Writing Root for Paradise Sands

KS: Upper KS2
Year Group: Year 6

Now with Mixed Age Suggestions



A Writing Root for The Whale

KS: Upper KS2
Year Group: Year 5

The number of our book-based
resources have expanded from
195 in 2021 to 520 in 2024...



Suggested Mixed Age Curriculum Map – Whole School

Theme/Term		Destruction & preservation – Autumn 1				Space & our world – Autumn 2			
Cycle A Y1/Y2	Writing Root/ Spelling Seed Text								
	Literary Leaf Text								
	Theme/Term	Similarities & differences – Spring 1				Change & relationships – Spring 2			
	Writing Root/ Spelling Seed Text								
Cycle B Y1/Y2	Literary Leaf Text								
	Theme/Term	Fantasy journeys – Summer 1				Structures & materials – Summer 2			
	Writing Root/ Spelling Seed Text								
	Literary Leaf Text								
Cycle C Y1/Y2	Theme/Term	Heroes & villains – Autumn 1				Helpfulness & kindness – Autumn 2			
	Writing Root/ Spelling Seed Text								
	Literary Leaf Text								
	Theme/Term	Storybook bears – Spring 1				Beasts & monsters – Spring 2			
	Writing Root/ Spelling Seed Text								
	Literary Leaf Text								
Cycle D Y1/Y2	Theme/Term	Fictional worlds – Summer 1				Urban and rural adventures – Summer 2			
	Writing Root/ Spelling Seed Text								
	Literary Leaf Text								
	Theme/Term								

CPD & Training

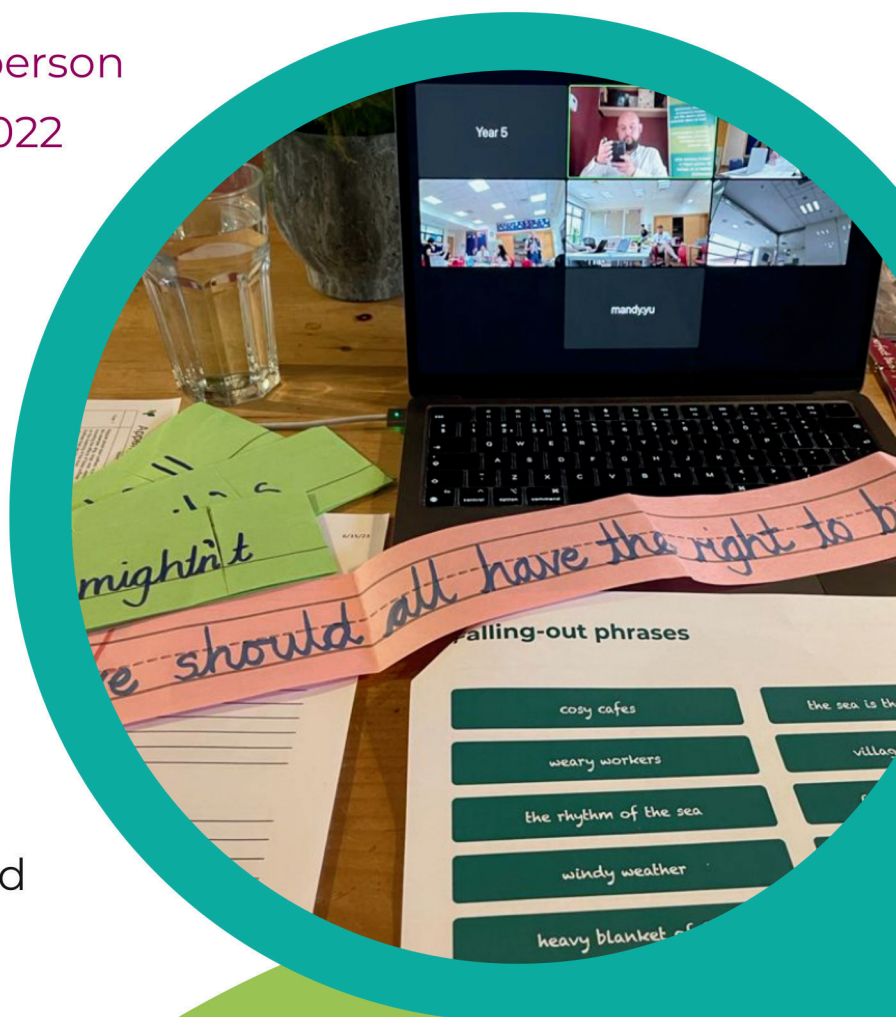
Schools who use our CPD offer continue to sign up...

We have delivered more in-person and online Insets between 2022 and 2024 than ever before.

In 2023 alone we delivered **65 Insets** in **11 countries**

355 teachers from **15 countries** attended our core training programme 'Teach Through a Text'.

100% said they'd recommend the training to a colleague



“Provided a **tremendous impact** that will further help me bring new texts to life and pique the children's interest & curiosity.”

– St Michael's Primary School



100%

Classes with EAL (English as an additional language), within the SEND/SEN/SEMH schools surveyed, said Literacy Tree strengthened confidence in using English.

89%

Schools within MATs feel their staff have acquired a more in-depth knowledge of high quality children's literature since using us.□

100%

SEND/SEN/SEMH schools feel our resources for CPD have contributed to an improved pedagogical understanding or have made their staff more confident.

90%

International schools feel that Literacy Tree has helped children display a wider curiosity for learning beyond the English curriculum.

90%

International schools believe that using Literacy Tree has increased engagement and curiosity as demonstrated through pupil enthusiasm.

90%

Teachers from **Independent schools** feel Literacy Tree has encouraged them to expand their book choices and offer more diverse contexts for learning.

*impact statistics taken from our Jan 2024 member survey



Embedded Schools

We know that the schools who have had the strongest impact have embedded our approach for a longer period of time, investing in the texts and CPD for teachers. Our **Embedded schools** have been members for more than 2 years.

94%

Embedded schools feel Literacy Tree has encouraged them to expand book choices and offer more diverse contexts for learning.

75%

Embedded schools feel that the approach has led to visible improvements in children's confidence and pride in reading and writing.

Embedded Growth

Increased levels of
engagement &
heightened
enthusiasm for
literacy.



Improved
knowledge of
authors and genres
& an increased
stamina for
reading/writing.

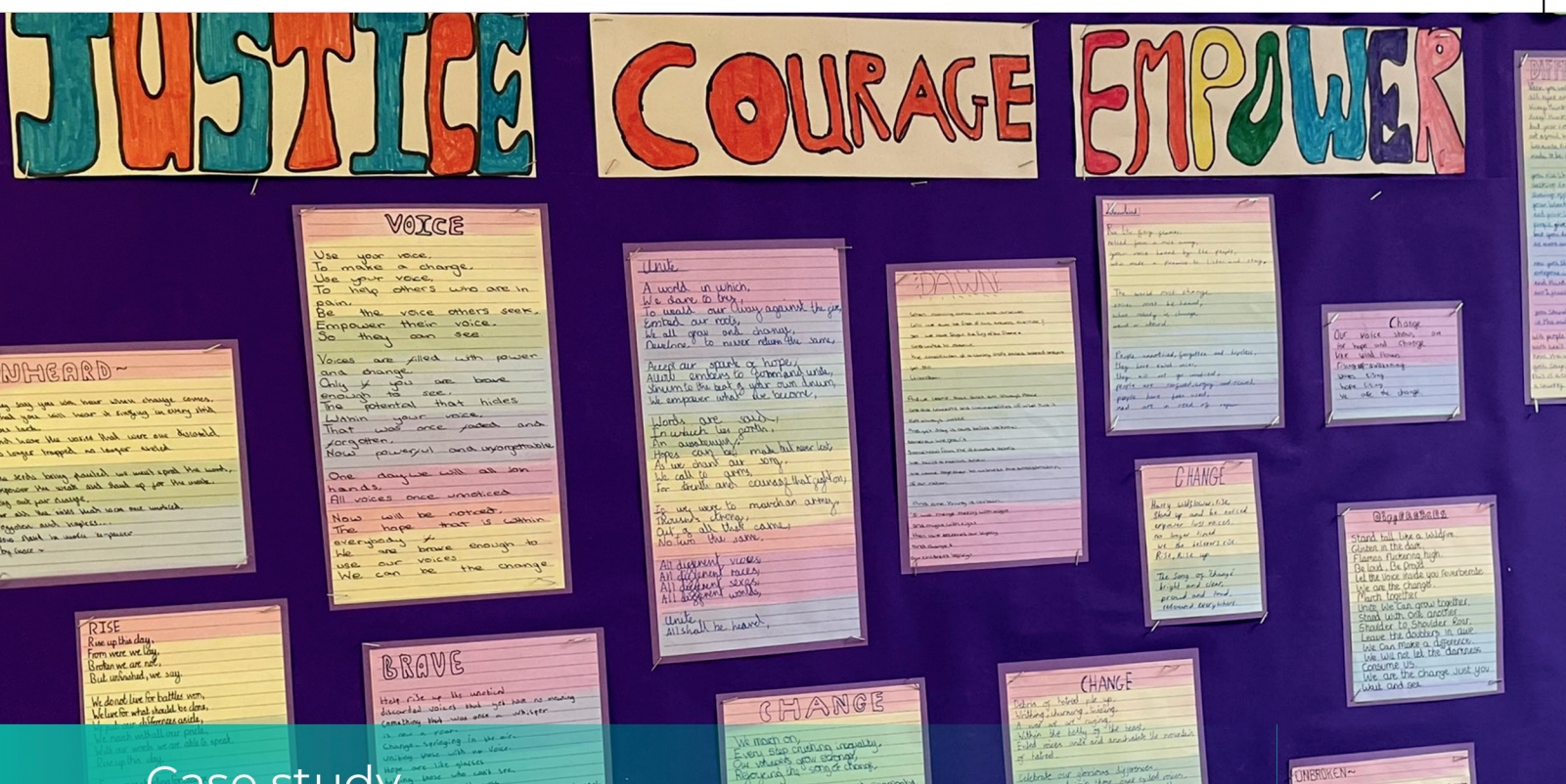


Increased levels of published work displayed around school & **embedded reading/writing culture.**



Children write **independently & enthusiastically** for a range of purposes & audiences, with a broad knowledge of children's literature.





Case study DALMAIN

Dalmain Primary School, London

Lewisham Local Authority
Two form entry
FSM: 21% | EAL: 29%

INTENT

The head of Dalmain Primary School joined in September 2018, bringing prior experience with the Literacy Tree approach from different schools. Despite diverse demographic challenges across these schools, the approach proved effective, fostering creativity, high-quality text choices, and an embedded approach to grammar. At Dalmain, staff were not confident with the requirements of the curriculum therefore the teaching of English was inconsistent and progress measures, particularly for disadvantaged pupils, were weak.

"[The children] absolutely love it, they really, really love their texts. It has become normal to them now to work with such high quality books, which is lovely."

IMPLEMENTATION

The school initially introduced Writing Roots and later incorporated Literary Leaves once writing became integral. The head emphasised understanding Literacy Tree as an approach, not a rigid scheme. Comprehensive training from Literacy Tree was crucial for staff to grasp the underlying concepts and Writing Roots. Ongoing investment in staff training remains a priority to enhance children's progress and learning. Staff regularly attend Literacy Tree training for refreshers and updates.

IMPACT

Children enthusiastically embraced the approach upon its introduction. Previously disinterested students became engrossed in classroom texts they could relate to, fostering a sense of pride and engagement. The impact on progress and attainment, following the introduction of Literacy Tree, could be seen very quickly. This is exemplified by the school's Ofsted report in May 2018, which highlighted writing as an area for development. In the follow up inspection that took place in May 2019, writing was recognised as a strength. Attainment and progress have continued to rise over the last few years, despite the national disruption to learning that all schools have had to work with.



BE BETTER THAN THE BEST



Case study

BRUNSWICK PARK

Brunswick Park Primary School, London

London Borough of Soutwark

Children on roll: 380

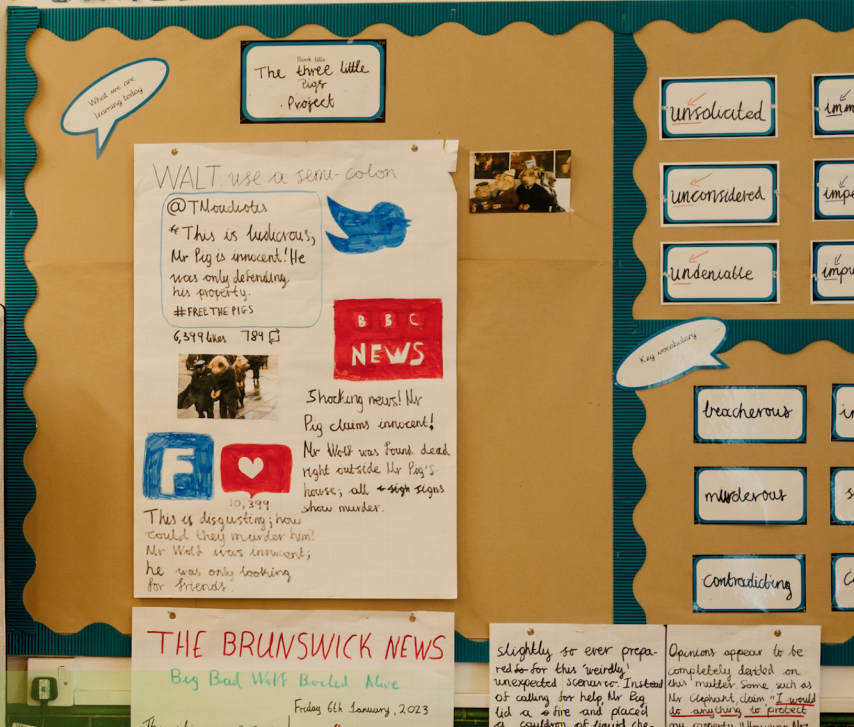
FSM: 18% | EAL: 27%

INTENT

Brunswick Park began their Literacy Tree journey in 2013, transitioning from a previously fragmented approach to writing instruction. Concerns arose over inconsistent outcomes and lack of regular writing practice among students. Teachers lacked confidence in curriculum content and desired outcomes, leading to activity-focused lessons rather than focused learning. This inconsistency also resulted in unequal opportunities for students across year groups and within classes.

"I am really proud of our books. [When] I show prospective parents round [...] we always look at children's writing. I would let [any] parent pick up any book."

ENGLISH WORKING WALL



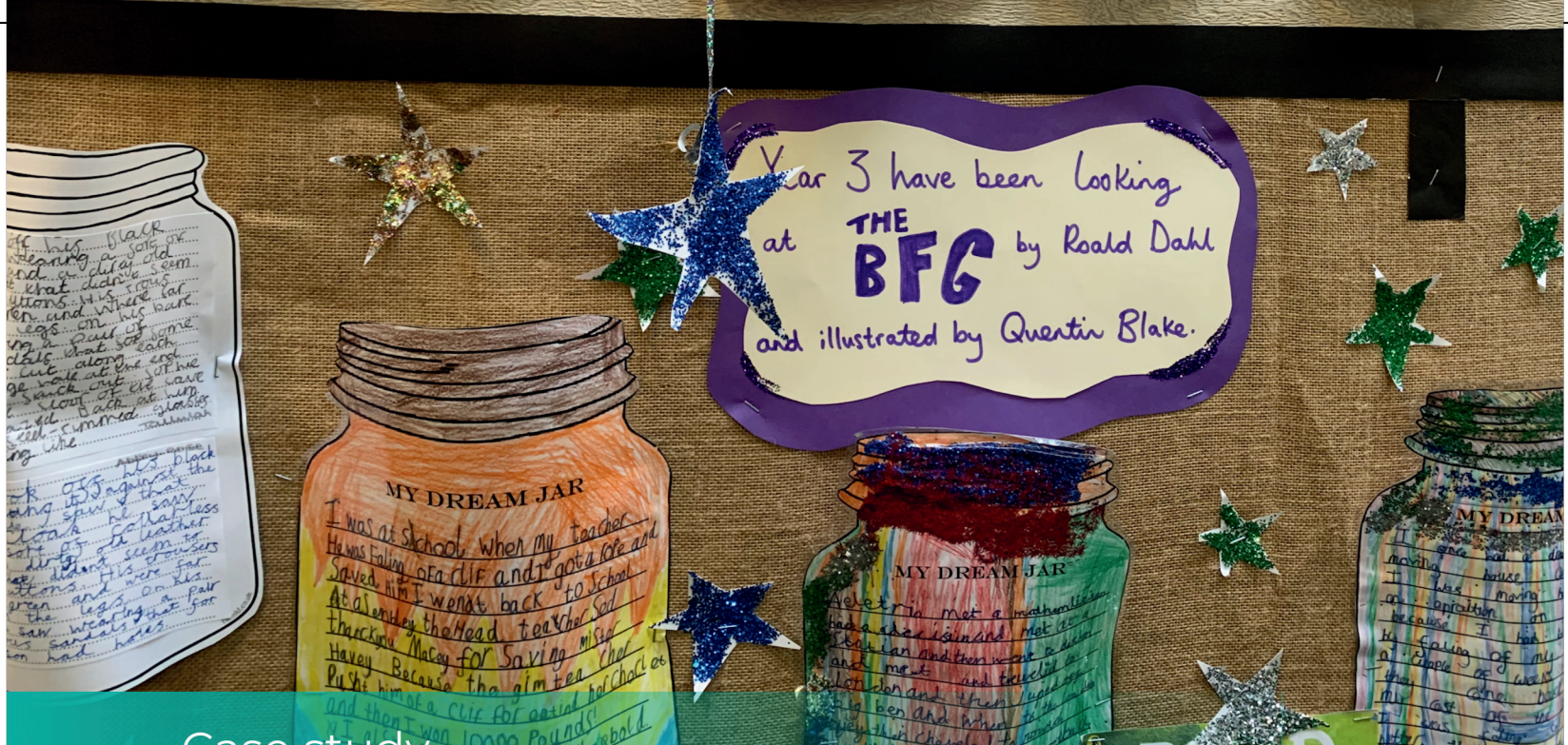
IMPLEMENTATION

When the school first introduced Literacy Tree, our Writing Root offering was smaller and the Literary Leaves and Spelling Seeds were not yet part of the offer. Because of their early adoption, they have regularly reviewed their book choices, as more texts become available and sequences updated. Teachers are encouraged to regularly check the Literacy Tree website for new additions. As the range of book choices has grown, the children have really enjoyed the diversity of texts on offer. This has given them the opportunity to try out a range of different books.

IMPACT

English at the school is now considered a strength. It is well taught and staff are confident with the content. The children understand the approach to learning, particularly because of the common elements that they come across as part of the sequences. For instance, children really understand about writing in role and have a sense of audience and purpose. Their confidence has led to significantly stronger outcomes in books. The school feels that the passion for children's literature is integral to all Literacy Tree resources, with the texts central to everything. They feel that this really supports their drive to embed a love of books in their school community and to tempt the children away from social media!





Case study

SHERINGHAM

Sheringham Primary School, Norfolk

- Standalone local authority school
- Two / three form entry
- FSM: 50% | EAL: 7%

INTENT

Sheringham Primary School started their Literacy Tree journey almost six years ago. They felt that their English offer had become diluted and staff no longer had a shared understanding of how to effectively teach writing. In addition, the school was keen to actively promote the importance of reading for pleasure. They recognised the importance of exposing children to a wide range of authors and texts, rather than just tried and tested books, which had become the staple of the school literary diet. They felt it was time for a refresh.

"What I really love about Literacy Tree is that our writing has sky-rocketed because the children actually have a purpose."

IMPLEMENTATION

The school decided to implement the whole Literacy Tree offer (Writing Roots, Literary Leaves and Spelling Seeds) from the offset. Because they needed to continue to teach their phonics programme in Reception and Year 1, they adapted the units so that the two complemented each other. Sheringham staff aimed to foster children's passion for reading and writing while meeting national curriculum standards. They found confidence in Literacy Tree units, designed by experienced educators, to bring texts to life, inspire students, and ensure full coverage and progression.

IMPACT

The Literacy Tree approach quickly captivated students, who eagerly anticipated the gradual unfolding of stories. The school ensured each book was available in the library, fostering independent reading for pleasure. Students exhibited improved grammar understanding and confidence, leading to higher-quality writing evidenced in books. Unexpectedly, students with English as an additional language benefited, accessing learning alongside peers through engaging books. Parents' involvement increased as they shared books in their home language, facilitating family engagement in learning. The school is proud of students' writing quality and anticipates positive outcomes in future assessments.





Case study

YEW TREE

Yew Tree Primary Academy, Knowsley
Wade Deacon Trust
One form entry, plus Designated Special
Provision for 28 children
FSM: 50% | EAL: 7%

INTENT

Yew Tree Primary Academy embarked on their Literacy Tree journey in September 2018, prompted by poor English results in the summer of 2017. The new principal and assistant principal prioritised broadening children's literary knowledge and representation, focusing on local, national, and global issues. They sought diverse literature to support students' development and future opportunities, aiming for both cultural change and improved results. Recognizing these criteria, they found the Literacy Tree approach aligned perfectly with their goals.

*"We are going to make these
gorgeous citizens through
Literature."*

IMPLEMENTATION

The school views staff receptiveness as crucial for their success, partly due to quality consultancy from Literacy Tree, providing support and confidence during implementation. They continue to invest in consultancy annually. Staff appreciate our text selection process, enabling confident choices for teaching. With a diverse student body, including SEND students, Yew Tree ensures equal access to quality texts by adapting sequences as needed. They actively engage with Literacy Tree networks, participating in panels and planning sessions, ensuring involvement in discussions and developments.

IMPACT

The school swiftly saw the positive impact of their new approach. Within the first year, over 30% more children reached expected levels in reading and writing. They were recognised as the most improved primary school in the local authority for both subjects. By the fourth year, their English results matched national standards. This success reflects a broader cultural shift, emphasising a text-centered approach and fostering a love for literature among students. Despite initial costs, the leadership team believes the investment was worthwhile, given the transformed attitude towards books and reading. Moreover, the approach has had a profound impact on the entire school community, fostering engagement, learning, and a strong sense of community. In Yew Tree's words, "it has changed everything about our school."



“

Go On. Be Brave!

Children are captivated, stimulated and engaged with the activities and stories we are discovering together.

Generated debate and impassioned writing.

The book and the planning had us all captivated. It generated fabulous work, tears and delight. Highly recommend.

We now have once-reluctant writers whose first question on arriving in the morning is, “are we looking at our book today?” and cheering when the answer is yes.

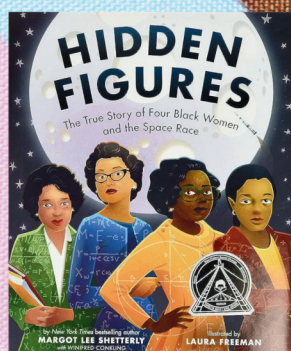
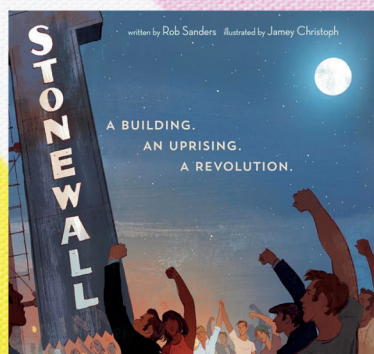
The book and the planning had us all captivated. It generated fabulous work, tears and delight. Highly recommend.

Literacy Tree has without question brought about a dramatic improvement in the quality of children's writing.

Our children's love and knowledge of literature has grown exponentially, and our staff are thoroughly enjoying teaching the planning sequences.

”

Deliberately Diverse



Diversity is integral to the library of Literacy Tree texts. Being editorially independent, Literacy Tree is free to choose high-quality literature from a range of authors and publishers.



It's amazing that Literacy Tree develop resources for such a wide range of books in terms of ethnicity and representation.

JT Williams
Author of *Lizzie and Belle Mysteries*



Advisory Panels

LGBTQIA+

Race & Cultures

SEND & Neuro-Divergence

Our experienced panels guide and inform us to ensure our chosen texts meet **inclusivity and authenticity standards** in representing **cultures and communities**. They serve in an advisory capacity, offering non-executive guidance in a non-decision making forum.

Our Flagship Schools



OLDCASTLE PRIMARY SCHOOL
Inspire Motivate Educate



**GREENGATE LANE
ACADEMY**
Astrea Academy Trust
INSPIRING BEYOND MEASURE



**The
British
School**
Rio de Janeiro



**DULWICH
WOOD**
PRIMARY & NURSERY
SCHOOLS

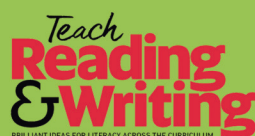
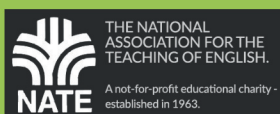


Brunswick Park
Primary School



VAN GOGH PRIMARY
Creating Excellence

Our partners / featured in



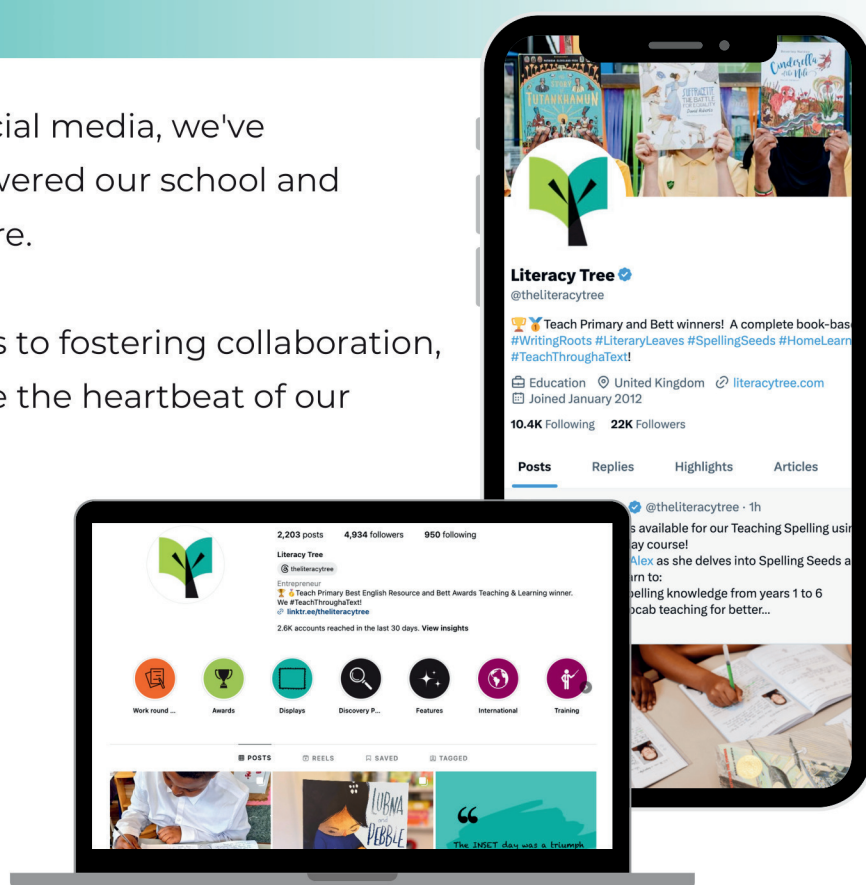
Our Social Media Community

Unleashing the power of our social media, we've connected, inspired, and empowered our school and teacher network like never before.

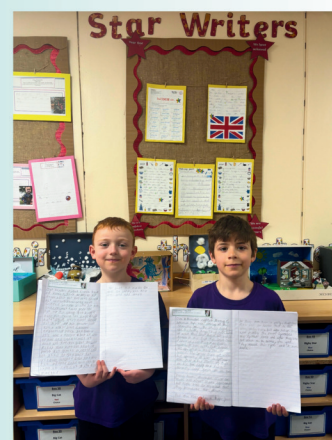
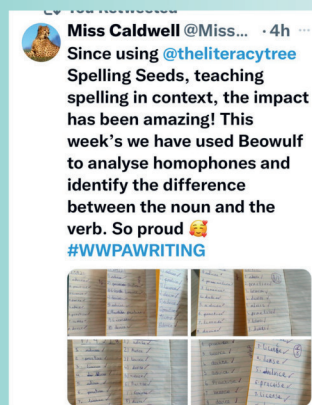
From sharing valuable resources to fostering collaboration, our online presence has become the heartbeat of our community.

22k
Followers on X

5k
Followers on Instagram



We also love to celebrate and share children's work on our channels.



@theliteracytree



Media

Video

We have a series of videos to help prospective and new members get a sense of what we're about. Thanks to YoYo films for producing these and capturing the spirit of what we do.



Blog & Book lists

Our consultants regularly upload book lists, literature reviews and blog posts. We're across industry updates, and aim to support teachers unpack everything from National Curriculum changes to Ofsted reports.



Literacy Tree App

The Literacy Tree app is completely free to download and can be used by anyone with a Free, Individual or School Membership. Designed and built to support work-life balance and to help with teachers' cognitive load, it's an easy-to-access addition to the suite of book-based resources already on offer.





“ We wanted quality texts that would inspire a lifelong love for both reading and writing to be central to our English curriculum. Literacy Tree offered all of these things and much more! ”

– Assistant Head and English Lead, Ashford Park Primary

All statistics presented in this report are accurate as of May 2024. Any subsequent changes or updates may not be reflected in this document.

Impact report produced by Bronte Larsen-Disney

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