What Makes a Reading School?

Loh Chin Ee
National Institute of Education
chinee.loh@nie.edu.sg
http://www.readingculturesg.org
• One year study on reading and school libraries in Singapore secondary schools (2 Integrated Programme, 1 Autonomous, 3 Government Co-Ed schools)

• Research Questions:
  1. What is the reading culture in each secondary school?
  2. What is the library culture in each secondary school?
  3. How is the school library integrated into the reading and learning culture of the school?

• School-wide reading survey

• Observations of school reading and library usage
  • Timed narratives
  • Time freezes
  • Visual data
  • Time-lapse data

• Interviews with Principal, HOD, Library coordinator and teachers

• Interviews with 12 to 18 Secondary Two students from each school (three interviews over a year)
Why Reading?

Engaged reading is correlated to academic achievement

Kirsch et al. (2002) Reading for Change: Performance and Engagement Across Countries (Results from PISA).
Three Project Concerns

1. How do we help low proficiency readers, particularly those from low income homes learn to read and want to read?
2. How do we cultivate a reading environment in our schools?
3. How can the school library be more central in encouraging students to read (and learn)?
“Teaching reading, then, begins with helping children to want the life of a reader and to envision that life for himself.”

–Lucy McCormick Calkins
“The Art of Teaching Reading”
p. 9
Reading Models
1. Do the principals and teachers read?
2. Do students see the staff reading?
3. Are there conversations around books and reading?

Reading Environment
1. Are there books around the schools?
2. Are there spaces for students to read in the school?
3. Is reading actively promoted in school?

Reading Integration
1. Is reading integrated into the curriculum?
2. Is reading integrated across subjects?
3. Does the curriculum support different kinds of reading?

Reading Equity
1. Does the school ensure all students have access to books?
2. Do reading programmes reach out to different kids in schools?
3. Are there programmes for students in need?
Three Case Studies, Three Findings

1. Students are motivated to read by pleasure.
2. A School that Focuses on Reading for Pleasure Can Encourage Low Proficiency Readers to Read
3. A School Library that Focuses on Reading Can Encourage Students to Read
I. Students are motivated to read by pleasure.
Across all schools and streams, students prefer to read for pleasure

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Functional Reading</th>
<th>Reading For Pleasure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>For better grades in tests and examinations</td>
<td>For relaxing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For learning new things</td>
<td>For enjoyment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For improving my language</td>
<td>Reading is my hobby</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For my homework and projects</td>
<td>When I have nothing else to do</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Network of resources for “finding” and “picking up” books

- Friends
  - e.g. verbal recommendations, blogs, trips to bookstore
- Family
  - e.g. Siblings’/Parents’ recommendations, books at home
- School
  - e.g. recommended books list, teachers’ recommendation
- Libraries
  - e.g. School and public
- Bookstores
  - e.g. Kinokuniya, Borders, Popular, airport; bookstores
- Other media
  - e.g. the Internet, movies, blogs, booklists
III. A School that Focuses on Reading for Pleasure Can Encourage Low Proficiency Readers to Read
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>School</th>
<th>Express</th>
<th>NA</th>
<th>NT</th>
<th>School</th>
<th>FAS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I like to read</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>78.7</td>
<td>57.6</td>
<td>46.2</td>
<td>68.9</td>
<td>56.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>D</td>
<td>65.5</td>
<td>59.5</td>
<td>53.3</td>
<td>62.4</td>
<td>55.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>E</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>85.7(IP)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>83.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F</td>
<td>67.3</td>
<td>51.2</td>
<td>46.2</td>
<td>58.4</td>
<td>46.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I see myself as a reader</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>53.9</td>
<td>32.4</td>
<td>29.1</td>
<td>23.9</td>
<td>29.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>D</td>
<td>40.8</td>
<td>31.2</td>
<td>23.3</td>
<td>36.0</td>
<td>21.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>E</td>
<td>58.1</td>
<td>66.1(IP)</td>
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<td>24.0</td>
<td>12.3</td>
<td>32.2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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</table>
School D
Co-ed Government School

• Morning reading programme
• Marking of special events such as World Book Day
• Visual Posters about reading
• Integration of reading and library into English and Mother Tongue periods: students are brought down to borrow books
III.
A School Library that Focuses on Reading Can Encourage Students to Read
SCHOOL LIBRARY USAGE VS PUBLIC LIBRARY (SURVEY DATA)

- Public Libraries
- School Libraries

- Secondary 1
- Secondary 2
- Secondary 3
- Secondary 4
- Whole School
Increased Loans
Commonwealth Secondary - Jan to Mar 2015 to 2017

Month-on-month Loans 2015 - 2017

- Jan
- Feb
- Mar

2015: 193, 142
2016: 199, 87
2017: 493, 483, 324
BEHAVIOURS OBSERVED OVER 5 DAYS IN TERM ONE

- Doing Homework: 1076
- Reading: [VALUE]
- Discussion: 367
- Browsing: 122
- Chatting: 71
- Consultation with: 67
- Handphone: 29
- Study/Revision: 28
- Research: 21
- Internet Browsing: 10
- Sketching/Drawing: 9
- Hanging out: 6
- Sleeping: 3
School A & F
Comparative Use of Libraries

- **Reading**: 581 (24%)
- **Studying**: 128 (5%)
- **Collaboration**: 108 (4%)
- **Leisure**: 284 (12%)

- **Reading Behaviours**: 596 (27%)
- **Studying Behaviours**: 48 (2%)
- **Classes**: 596 (27%)
- **Leisure Behaviours**: 977 (44%)
- **Others**: 48 (2%)
How Can We Encourage a Culture of Reading in Our Schools?
1. Do the principals and teachers read?
2. Do students see the staff reading?
3. Are there conversations around books and reading?

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