Literature Spine

Core texts for depth study

Academic year 2026-27

PRIMARY CUSPA CURRICULUM WITH UNITY SCHOOLS PARTNERSHIP READING

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The principles

Each cohort will have a suite of core texts that will form the depth study for the academic year. These texts represent a promise from the school to every pupil that it serves of the literature that it is committed to studying throughout a pupil's school journey. These texts have been mapped carefully to ensure a breadth of experiences, authors, texts and themes is addressed across the Primary years. In addition to these texts, there are core poems that each year group will study in detail. Other texts that will be studied in part will be outlined within the curriculum. This spine represents the core texts for depth study only. The literature spine has been harmonised with the wider curriculum, where appropriate. Changes to the long-term sequence have been reflected for the academic year 2025-26.

CUSP Reading includes School's Choice modules for each year group. These give teachers the opportunity to substitute a text that a school may decide not to study based on the needs of their particular context or cohort, without compromising the structure or quality of the Reading units. Teachers and leaders should carefully track any changes that are made to ensure that the curriculum retains balance over time and that any changes are reflected in whole school curriculum documentation. The expectation is that most schools will work with the original literature spine.

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Year 1

Autumn 1	Autumn 2	Spring 1	Spring 2	Summer 1	Summer 2
Structured Storytimes: Let's Stick Together, On Sudden Hill, Traction Man is Here	The Storm Whale	The Tale of Peter Rabbit	and tango makes three	Here We Are	There's a Rang-Tan in My Bedroom
Beegu	The Owl and the Pussycat Edward Lear	The Tale of Peter Rabbit	Chocolate Cake *Michael Rosen*	Here We Are	There's a Rang-Tan in My Bedroom
Where the Wild Things Are	Aesop's Fables – The Boy Who Cried Wolf	Look Up!		The Lion Inside	Aesop's Fables – The Hare and the Tortoise
Where the Wild Things Are					The Proudest Blue
School's Choice modules: Rapunzel, Too Much Stuff, Peace on Earth, Spend It!					

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Year 2

Autumn 1	Autumn 2	Spring 1	Spring 2	Summer 1	Summer 2
Grandad's Island	Paddington	The Quangle Wangle's Hat *Edward Lear*	The Rhythm of the Rain	Little People, Big Dreams David Attenborough	Fantastic Mr Fox
Aesop's Fables – The Goose that Laid the Golden Eggs	Paddington	Coming to England	The Rhythm of the Rain	Fantastically Great Women Who Changed the World	Fantastic Mr Fox
Mrs Noah's Pockets	The Christmas Pine *Julia Donaldson*	The Street Beneath My Feet	Aesop's Fables – The Sun and the Wind	Fantastically Great Women Who Changed the World	Fantastic Mr Fox
School's Choice modules: Somebody Crunched Colin, A Planet Full Of Plastic And How You Can Help, The Enormous Crocodile, #Goldilocks (A Hashtag Cautionary Tale), The Shopping Basket					

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Year 3

Autumn 1	Autumn 2	Spring 1	Spring 2	Summer 1	Summer 2
Greta and the Giants	Leon and the Place Between	Sam Wu is Not Afraid of the Dark	Operation Gadgetman	The Dancing Bear	The Magician's Nephew
The Pebble in My Pocket	Leon and the Place Between	Sam Wu is Not Afraid of the Dark	Operation Gadgetman	The Dancing Bear	The Magician's Nephew
The Pebble in My Pocket	'Twas the Night before Christmas	Sam Wu is Not Afraid of the Dark & My Shadow *Robert Louis Stephenson*	Operation Gadgetman	The Dancing Bear	The Magician's Nephew
School's Choice modules: The Little Prince, The Great Food Bank Heist, Wildsmith: Into the Dark Forest, What is AI?: The curious kid's guide to artificial intelligence, Why Money Matters					

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Year 4

Autumn 1	Autumn 2	Spring 1	Spring 2	Summer 1	Summer 2
The Queen's Nose	The Girl Who Stole an Elephant	Varjak Paw	Young, Gifted and Black	The Boy at the Back of the Class	The Wind in the Willows
The Queen's Nose	The Girl Who Stole an Elephant	Varjak Paw	Young, Gifted and Black & Caged Bird *Maya Angelou*	The Boy at the Back of the Class	The Wind in the Willows & The Walrus and the Carpenter *Lewis Carroll*
The Raven Edgar Allen Poe	The Girl Who Stole an Elephant	Varjak Paw	Young, Gifted and Black	The Boy at the Back of the Class	The Wind in the Willows
School's Choice modules: The Borrowers, What a Waste Rubbish, recycling and protecting our planet, The Land of Roar, The Small Things, Why Money Matters					

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Year 5

Autumn 1	Autumn 2	Spring 1	Spring 2	Summer 1	Summer 2
Shackleton's Journey	The Explorer	Boy in the Tower	A Midsummer Night's Dream	Secrets of a Sun King	Five Children and It
Shackleton's Journey	The Explorer	Boy in the Tower	I Am Not A Label	Secrets of a Sun King	Five Children and It
Shackleton's Journey	The Explorer	Boy in the Tower & Daffodils *William Wordsworth*	I Am Not A Label	Secrets of a Sun King & If *Rudyard Kipling*	Five Children and It
School's Choice modules: A Wrinkle in Time, The Rabbits, Boy Giant, Curiosity, The Wrong Shoes					

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Year 6

Autumn 1	Autumn 2	Spring 1	Spring 2	Summer 1	Summer 2
Rooftoppers	Pig Heart Boy	Skellig	All Aboard the Empire Windrush	Dare to Be You	Introduction to Dickens – Oliver Twist
Rooftoppers	Pig Heart Boy	Skellig	All Aboard the Empire Windrush	Dare to Be You	Introduction to Dickens – Oliver Twist
Rooftoppers & The Listeners *Walter de la Mare*	How to Live Forever	Skellig & A Carol From Flanders *Frederick Niven*	The Island	Dare to Be You	Introduction to Dickens – Oliver Twist
School's Choice modules: Treasure Island, The Future is in our Hands: Climate Action, Now or Never: A Dunkirk Story, The Final Year, The Wrong Shoes					

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