

# JCSP Peer Tutoring Project Report

## Evaluation Report

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The Peer Tutoring Reading Research Project was one of several research projects carried out by the Support Service for the Junior Certificate School Programme, under the JCSP Literacy Strategy. This strategy is funded by the Department of Education and Science, under the Early Literacy Initiative.

## Abstract

This project ran in 13 JCSP schools over a 6 week period in 2003. Second year JCSP students were trained as tutors in the paired reading technique and were teamed up with second class primary school students, on average 3 times per week. The focus of the project was on how the role of tutoring impacted on the literacy levels of those 2nd year students, who were on average 3 years behind their chronological age in reading. Improvement was measured by reading age improvements, observations of attitudinal changes and increased levels of reading. It also looked at the impact on self esteem and confidence on these students, as well as the impact of the role of the tutor. This was to be ascertained through the use of questionnaires and the completion of observational logs. The impact on the second level students included:

- 48% of the students involved improved their reading ages, with 41% of these improving by 1 or more years. Greatest improvement occurred in students with a pre project reading age of between 7-9 years.
- Dramatic improvements in attitudes to reading with all schools noting the considerable improvements in self esteem and confidence.
- Participating schools noted the improvement in the willingness of the students to read aloud in class as a result of the project. Schools also noted increased amounts of reading and borrowing of books. Students became more aware of the skills involved in reading.

The students took on their role very responsibly, enjoying the status of the role with no instance of misbehaviour noted.

Both groups enjoyed the positive one-to-one relationship and all wished it to continue when the projects were finished. Overall it was reported that attendance improved for the duration of the project. The impact on the 2nd class students:

- The project had a very positive effect on the primary students with reading ages improving and project co-ordinators and teachers reporting improved attitudes and confidence in reading. The positive encouragement and affirmation worked well. When asked how the project co-ordinators would change if they were to run the programme again only minor changes were noted, such as changes in the times of sessions and record keeping.
- The enthusiasm with which the students embraced the role of being tutor was to the forefront of all the feedback from schools, as they thoroughly enjoyed working with the younger students. The majority pre-read all the books in order to be well prepared for their young reader. They took great pride in the fact that their students got through a lot of reading material. All schools planned to run the project again.

## "Qui docet discit" (He who teaches, learns) Allen (1976:9)

In 2002, schools participating in the Junior Certificate School Programme were invited to participate in Research Projects. These projects were concerned with creating interest, motivation and ultimately improvement in reading. One of these Research Projects was to investigate the impact on literacy levels of second year, second level students acting as reading tutors to second class primary pupils. The focus was to be on the impact of the project on second level JCSP students.

This project developed from a JCSP Research Project run in 2002 on Peer Tutoring, where the Paired Reading Technique was employed. The research indicated that Peer Tutoring made a significant impact on literacy levels. The intensive, positive, one to one tutoring means that the younger reader makes great strides. An interesting aspect of the research also indicates that, not only does the younger reader make strides, but so too does the tutor. Indeed, the tutor often gains even more from the situation both in terms of literacy and social development. In 2003 the JCSP Support Service invited schools to participate in this research, based on this, and the success of a pilot project in Nagle Community College Blackrock, Cork where second year students mentored second class students. We invited schools to participate in this Research Project.

*Tell me and I forget. Show me and I remember, Involve me and I understand.* "  
(Goodlad 1995 :11)

Peer Tutoring is by no means a new phenomenon in education. Indeed Aristotle in ancient Greece is reported to have used student leaders, known as Archons to help him (Hornby, Atkinson and Howard, 2000:133). Hornby et al outline the growth in the popularity of Peer Tutoring in the United States in the 1960s and attribute this revival in Peer Tutoring to an "impending shortage of teachers." (Hornby et al, 2000: 133). Professor Topping (1990: 14) reiterates this when he explains how professionals in the education system have come realise that there will never be enough qualified personnel available to offer direct service to all those in need. He goes on to outline how in education there has been a surge in interest in co-operative learning and particularly the kind involving non-professional involvement. These new developments, he adds, place considerable emphasis on one-to-one tutoring as a way of optimising time on task and immediacy of task.

The terminology involved in describing Peer Support Programmes is varied and diverse - Peer Tutoring, Cross Age Peer Tutoring, Peer Leading, Paired Reading, Buddying Programmes and Collaborative Teaching to name but a few (Charlton, 1998). The traditional education model has always emphasised direct instruction. As Topping (2001) describes it, "the transmission of information from the professional teacher to the learner." He goes on to say that regardless of the size of a class, social interaction between the teacher and the pupil will always be scarce. He points out that, as a result, professional teaching increasingly works as a manager of effective learning, an arrangement which he says can in fact be supported by what he calls 'Peer Assisted Learning'.

Goodlad and Hirst (1990: 1) define 'peer' as:

*"someone belonging to the same group in society where membership is defined by status. In this case the status is that of being a fellow learner and not a professional teacher."*

Topping (2002) describes Peer Assisted Learning as:

*"the acquisition of knowledge and skill through active helping and supporting among companions, who are matched or equal in status. It involves people from similar social groupings, who are not professional teachers helping each other to learn and learning themselves by so doing."*

Damon and Phelps (Nugent, 2001 :71) refer to Peer Tutoring as "an approach in which one child instructs another child in material on which the first is an expert and the second is a novice." (1989a p. 11)



However, multiple definitions of Peer Tutoring exist - not all are experts. In Cross Age Peer Tutoring the tutor is older than the tutee. There are three commonly cited benefits of peer and cross age peer tutoring:

- the earning of academic skills
- the development of social behaviours
- classroom discipline and the enhancement of peer relations (Greenwood, Carta and Hall 1988 p 264). Researchers have also identified improvements in self esteem and one of its components - internal locus of control. It is important to note that all such benefits accrue to both the tutor and tutee. Research on low achieving and other high needs students as tutors increased in the last decade. Impressive gains for low achievers, behaviourally disordered and other at risk students in both academic and affective realms and at all grades and levels. Areas showing significant benefits for tutors engaged in peer or cross age tutoring include:
  - Academic achievement in various subject areas, particularly reading and mathematics (Byrd 1990; Cardenas, et al. 1991; Maheady, et al. 1988,1991; McLaughlin and Vacha 1992)
  - Locus of control (Lazerson, et al. 1988)
  - Self esteem (Byrd 1990; Cardenas, et al 1991)
  - Social Skills (Mathur and Rutherford 1991)
  - Attitude toward school (Cardenas, et al. 1991)
  - Dropout rate truancy, tardiness (Cardenas, et al 1991; Lazerson et al. 1988)

Additionally, it was found to be one of the most cost effective ways of supporting students.

## Why does Peer Tutoring work?

One reason may be that the students speak another language than do teachers with students. 'The expert party is not very far removed from the novice party in authority or knowledge' Damon and Phelps (1989a p. 138). Such differences affect the nature of discourse between tutor and tutee, because they place the tutee in a less passive role than does the adult/child instructional relationships. Being closer in knowledge and status, the tutee in the peer relation feels freer to express opinions, ask questions and risk untested solutions. The interaction between instructor and pupil is more balanced and livelier.

This is why conversations between peer tutors and their tutees are highly mutual even though the relationship are not exactly equal in status.

The Junior Certificate School Programme is a national programme sponsored by the Department of Education and Science and the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment. It is based on the concept that all young people are capable of achieving real success in school and that they can have a positive experience of education, if the conditions are favourable. The Programme is a way of working within the Junior Certificate, which is specifically designed to help young people who have had a difficult experience of school.

The aim of this applied JCSP Research Project was to examine the effects of a Cross Age Peer Tutoring intervention with a group of second year pupils from the Junior Certificate School Programme and second class primary school students. Embedded in the research proposal are the following themes:

1. Would the Cross Age Peer Tutoring project engender any changes in the participating pupils reading ages?
2. Would the Cross Age Peer Tutoring effect any attitudinal changes towards reading amongst the cohort?
3. As a result of participation in the Cross Age Peer Tutoring programme would the pupil's self-esteem be improved?

## Literature and the Research Questions

With regard to a literature review the following three themes will be examined:

1. Reading Attainment and Cross Age Paired Reading
2. Attitudinal changes towards Reading
3. Improvement in self-esteem.

Nugent (2001: 1) in describing the improvement in reading ages in her study states "the trend towards progress was remarkable with helpers making significant gains in their own reading ability. The reported gains of 6.55 months for learners and 14.82 months for helpers are indeed impressive". Charlton (1998: 62) outlines a study by Houghton and Bain, who worked with 14 years old below average readers. These pupils were trained to tutor eight students of similar age for whom English was a second language. In terms of reading accuracy the tutors gained an average of 8.2 months, while the tutees gained an average of 9.6 months. Charlton describes these gains as being "significant statistically". Topping (1990: 17) outlines similar results in his summary of the 185 projects he investigated. He states: "The average child gained 6.97 months in reading accuracy and 9.23 months in reading comprehension age. This implies that these children were gaining at 3.3 times 'normal rates' in reading accuracy and 4 times 'normal rates' in reading comprehension."

### Attitudinal Changes

According to Vygotsky's Theory of Cognitive Development, each child is born with a set of abilities, such as attention, perception and memory. Input from the child's society in terms of interactions with more skilled adults and peers, then moulds these abilities into more complex higher order cognitive functions (Hetherington and Parke 1993:332). Merrett (1998:59) links these ideas with Peer Tutoring when he outlines the reasons why Peer Tutoring can be beneficial. He cites the work of Clay (1979), who explains how skilled readers can become very adept at correcting their own mistakes. He explains that, for students with poor literacy levels, they are not very successful in this particular skill and as a result they tend to fall "*further and further behind.*" (Ibid). He suggests,

*"What they need is one-to-one attention from a more skilled reader to help them along and provide support and encouragement".* (Ibid)

Peer Tutoring provides the tutee with the 'skilled adults and peers' as outlined earlier. According to Hetherington and Parke (1993 :332), Vygotsky focuses on the social nature of Cognitive Development and emphasises the critical role that the social world plays in facilitating children's development. Peer Tutoring provides this social setting, whereby the tutors and tutees can interact and engage in a meaningful way. It is through this interaction that the pupils' attitudes towards reading can be influenced positively. Kalkowski in summarising the results of Cohen, Kulik and Kulik's 1982 meta analysis states,

*"the results showed a moderately beneficial effect on the tutees achievement and a smaller but significant effect on their attitudes towards subject matter".*

Nugent (2001 :71) reiterates this when she lists "*more positive attitudes to school*" as a benefit of Peer Tutoring. Hetherington and Parkes (1993 :333) talk about intellectual scaffolding, the type of instruction, which was inspired by Vygotsky's ideas. Scaffolding is, they state,

*"the instructional process by which the teacher adjusts or modifies the amount and intellectual scaffolding for the child to climb".* (Ibid)



Peer Tutoring by its very nature tends to provide the tutee with a positive role model in the form of the Tutor. This in turn influences the tutee in terms of their attitudes towards reading. Goodlad (1995: 15), in outlining the outcomes of Peer Tutoring for both tutees and tutors' lists,

*"improved motivation, affective and attitudinal gains, generalised gains in achievement and greater sense of achievement".*

Charlton (1998:52) further emphasises the possibility of attitudinal change when he cites the work of Rogers (1983), who asserts,

*"there is a plenitude of evidence to show that those in receipt of peer support can develop more motivation to work and an improved attitude to academic work".*

### Self-Esteem

JCSP students will have experienced failure at some stage in their schooling. Self-image and self-esteem are two areas where these pupils need constant opportunities for advancement. Peer Tutoring provides one such means. Charlton (1998:52) states "personal attention of this type can provide exceptional scope for the pupils to 'grow' emotionally and socially as well as academically". He adds, "Experiences of this kind will almost certainly help boost tutees self-esteem". Kalkowski cites Damon and Phelps who outline some of the benefits as being "children's understanding of fairness and their self-esteem".

Westwood (1999:33) quotes Schunk (1989) and McLeod (1992) when he explains the term 'learned helplessness'. This phenomenon has particular relevance to JCSP students and their self-esteem. He explains it thus: "where the individual anticipates failure immediately any new situation occurs and cannot conceive of being able to change this outcome". Children with an internal locus of control are likely to appreciate that their success is due to their efforts and hard work, whereas pupils with an external locus of control tend to view their efforts as having little effect on their learning. Westwood (1993:33) quotes Cole (1995) when he says:

*"many children with learning problems and with negative school experiences may remain markedly in their locus of control, feeling that their efforts have impact on their progress and that what happens to them in learning tasks is unrelated to their own actions".*

Modification through the use of positive reinforcement deserves mention. Hethington and Parke (1993:9) state:

*"positive reinforcement, such as a friendly smile, praise or a special treat can increase the likelihood that the behaviour will occur again."*

This is what occurs during the tutor/tutee interaction throughout peer tutoring. Goodlad (1995: 115) reiterates this when stating:

*"According to the behaviourist model, a student's learning is improved when they receive more instruction, when they are given more individual help and when their questions are answered quickly."*

Thus, it follows that if the students can see the link between their own efforts (for which they have been praised and perhaps rewarded for) and an improvement in their own reading skills, then it follows that their self-esteem should be enhanced as a result. Topping (2001) underscores this when he states

*"these (structured forms of peer assisted learning) often yield social motivational and self-esteem benefits for both the helper and the helped".*

Osguthorpe and Scruggs (Hornby et al, 2000:143) outline the relevance of Peer Tutoring to self-esteem when they state:

*"Tutoring young children can bring a sense of self worth and success to children who have previously experienced little but failure".*

## Rationale of the Research Project

The project involved 2nd year students teaming up with 2nd class students for Paired Reading over a 6 to 8 week period. Improvement in reading, attitudes to reading as well as social skills development with both parties was measured. However, the focus of the research project was on the improvements of the 2nd year JCSP students.

The schools were asked to identify second year JCSP students with reading difficulties and a second-class primary school that would be interested in participating in the project.

The Paired Reading Initiative focused on the following objectives:

- To investigate the potential and benefits of a paired reading project for the JCSP students
- To identify, document and assess progress, success and achievements using qualitative and quantitative assessment
- To develop a model of good practice in the running of a Cross Age Paired Reading Project
- To track and document anecdotal evidence of attitudinal change among JCSP students to reading
- To investigate the potential and benefits of a paired reading project for the primary school pupils
- To document and disseminate findings of the project through inservice and through project report

### 13 schools were invited to participate

- Plunkett College, Whitehall, Dublin
- Boys Comprehensive School, Ballymun, Dublin
- Colaiste Eoin, Crumlin, Dublin
- Caritas College, Ballyfermot, Dublin
- Stranorlar Vocational School, Donegal
- Carndonagh Community School, Donegal
- Dungarvan Technical College, Waterford
- St Tiernans Community School, Dublin
- Newcourt School, Bray, Wicklow
- St. Augustine's School, Blackrock, Dublin
- Enniscorthy Vocational School, Wexford
- Catherine McAuley School, Limerick
- St Brigid's School, Dundalk



## Research Elements

Research Elements were built into the initiative in order to identify and evaluate progress and achievement, as well as difficulties and limitations.

- Quantitative and qualitative methodologies were employed to ascertain the success and limitations of the project. Pre and Post testing using the standardised group-reading test NFER Nelson group reading test was administered by all participating schools (primary and secondary).
- Each project organiser was supplied with an observational log as a means to tracking and recording anecdotal evidence of attitudinal change throughout the six weeks.
- Attitudinal and affective outcomes were judged through the use of structured teacher observation with pre and post questionnaires and observational logs.
- Structured student observations were gathered using pre and post project questionnaires from both the primary and post primary students. The project organisers were asked to maintain an observational log.

Additionally, on completion of the project, the organiser completed an evaluation of the project.

- Questionnaires were used pre and post project for both primary and secondary participating students.
- Questionnaires were used pre and post project for all teachers involved in the project.
- Participating teachers met at the start and end of the project to discuss the critical issues and questions, as well as articulate the successes and achievements of the project. Sharing of best practice and future recommendations were also a feature of these meetings.

## Planning the Project

All of the schools that participate in the JCSP (150 at the time) were invited to apply to participate in the project. Schools were chosen from the applications primarily on the basis of their ability to carry out the requirements of the project:

- identify the two groups of students
- establish a link with a cooperative primary school
- agree to pre and post test the students
- gather the observational data
- attend planning and development meetings with the support service.

13 schools were successful. The project co-ordinators from these schools were asked to attend a project meeting.

## First Meeting

During this session the project was outlined and the research questions were posed and there were opportunities to discuss critical issues regarding the project.

International research was presented on the value of Peer Tutoring, the impact Paired Reading has on reading improvement and the particular improvements that the tutor can make as a result of their engagement in such a project. The use other education systems make of this methodology was illustrated by taking Australian and American examples of schools where Peer Tutoring forms the basis of their approach to teaching and learning having recognised the benefits to all concerned.

The Paired Reading technique to be used in the project was outlined, primarily to ensure consistency in approach across the schools.

The tutor-training programme to be presented to the second year students was discussed and agreed. Confidentiality, commitment and the role of the tutor and record keeping being highlighted. Time was also given to exploring the management of the JCSP students in the primary schools where behavioural problems were an issue. The logistics of bringing two groups together was discussed.

The administration of the group reading test NFER Nelson Group Reading Test 11 6-14 (2000) was discussed. The suitability of the reading tests only as a crude measure of reading was discussed and it was pointed out that because it was standardised in the UK means that the rankings cannot be used in the research. Additionally, the choice of student was emphasised, where we agreed that such a project will impact most significantly on students with a reading age between 8 and 10. Students with a reading age below that need more intensive programmes of work and their reading may not be adequately above the 2nd class students for the project to be a success. The administration of the tests was also discussed and the testing materials distributed.

The pre and post questionnaires were presented and discussed. Questionnaires were provided for

- second level students
- primary pupils and
- primary and post primary teachers (see appendix)

It was emphasised that all student questionnaires must be accompanied by a teacher reading out the questions.

A new JCSP Statement for Paired Reading was presented for use during the project (See appendix).

A planning pro forma was distributed (see appendix). Time was provided at the meeting to plan the project including selection of students, tutor training, matching of the tutors with the tutees, structuring the first meeting, choice of books, organisation of the contact, monitoring the sessions, evaluation and feedback.

Participating schools received a subvention of €1,000 to cover the costs of:

- Training materials
- Substitution for teacher for the training sessions and to implement the project.
- Suitable reading materials for the students
- Pre and post testing
- Gathering of the observational data
- Transport costs
- Completion of the final evaluation.

The use of this subvention was discussed.



The emphasis throughout the initial meeting was that each co-ordinator of the project in schools would have a shared understanding of the research questions, a consistent view of the training and the process of Paired Reading.

### School Implementation

All the projects took place between Christmas and Easter 2003. Each school identified a local primary school and discussed the project with the Principal and the teacher. All primary schools agreed to participate.

### The Running of the Project

Second year students were identified and tested, as were second-class students. The project co-ordinator liaised with the primary school teacher as to the most suitable reading materials. Pre questionnaires were completed by all of the students and teachers involved.

### Training of Tutors

The second year students participated in a training programme. On average the students received four hours training.

As agreed at the initial meeting the training programme emphasised:

- Confidentiality and commitment
- Record keeping
- How to introduce the young reader to the Paired Reading technique
- Managing the younger student
- How to keep the student on task incorporating praise
- Taking on the role of tutor responsibly.

It was primarily the JCSP co-ordinator that ran the training programme with the help of learning support teachers/librarians/adult literacy tutor and in the case of one school, the school Principal. Role play was a feature of most of the projects affording the students an insight into how to implement the Paired Reading. Two schools used circle time to set the ground rules.

The majority used the materials supplied by the JCSP Support Service *Start a Peer Tutoring Project in Your School*, Teachers' Manual and Resource Pack.

Over half the schools used the video produced by St Kilian's Community School in Bray, on running a paired reading project, during their paired reading programme.

All schools reported very successful training programmes.

## Selection of Reading Materials

It was essential to ensure that the reading materials were within the range of the tutors, as well as being interesting to the primary school students. One project co-ordinator compiled and disseminated a list of books that she had found to be successful to all participating schools in the first few weeks of the project. This proved helpful to schools in the selection of books.

In most cases the students had the opportunity to practice reading the book before meeting the younger students. This inspired great confidence and motivation.

The logistics of the students meetings varied. Some students were on the same campus while others had to organise bus journeys from one school to another.

## The Sessions

On average the programme ran for:

- a period of a six weeks
- 3 times per week for a half an hour reading time.

All but one met in the primary school. According to the evaluations and observational logs as well as the questionnaires, the sessions were very successful. The pre reading by the tutors enabled smooth running of the project. Records, as agreed, were kept by all. Strong relationships developed between the older and younger students.

## The Outcomes

Impact on the Second year second level JCSP students was considered under three headings:

1. Reading
2. Self Esteem
3. Role of the tutor

### 1. Reading

The reading ages of over half the students involved improved by between three years and one month in the six week period. The NFER Nelson Group Reading Test was administered to 146 second level JCSP students. All of these were involved in the pre and post testing with a Reading Age ranging from 6 - 15.

#### Pre test Reading Age of Participating Students

Reading Age	Number of Students	% of students
6	18	12%
7	20	14%
8	23	16%
9	32	22%
10	20	14%
11	18	12%
12	12	8%
13	2	1%
14	-	-
15	1	1%

77% of students involved were reading 3 or more years behind their chronological age.

65% or 95 students had a Reading Age of between 7 - 10.



### Of 146 students:

- 70 improved (48%)
- 64 disimproved (44%)
- 12 stayed the same (8%)

Of the 70 students whose Reading Age improved after a 6 week period, 29 (41%) improved by 1 or more years. The greatest improvement was of 3.00 Reading Age (8.06 - 11.06).

### Pre Test Reading Ages of the 29 students who improved reading age by 1 or more Peer years:

Reading Age	Number of Students
7	6
8	9
9	8
10	3
12	3

### Pre Test Reading Ages of 70 students who improved

Reading Age	%	Number of Students
6	9%	6
7	19%	13
8	21%	15
9	24%	7
10	9%	6
11	9%	6
12	9%	6

Of the students that stayed the same or disimproved in post Reading Age test:

- 22 had pre test Reading Age of 11 or more
- 19 had pre test Reading Age of 7 or below
- 58% of the students had a Reading Age either below 7 or above 11

So over half those who disimproved or stayed the same had pre tested with either a Reading Age of 7 or below or a Reading Age of 11 or above. It was emphasised at the outset of the project that the students who could gain most from the project were students with a Reading Age between 8 and 10, and the findings have established that 64% of the students that improved had a pre project Reading Age of between 7 and 9.

### Second Level Students Responses to Questionnaires

128 of the 168 second level students returned the pre project questionnaire. 124 of the 168 second level students returned the post project questionnaire.

#### Findings

- 37% found that being a tutor was their favourite part of the project
- 43% found that reading with their tutor was their favourite part of the project
- 77% agreed that the training prepared them well for Paired Reading (24% agreed that it did "more or less")
- 90% said that they liked being a tutor (10% Kind of liked being a tutor)

*The areas in which the students themselves felt that they made progress in reading as a result of being involved in the project:*

- 33% reading aloud
- 19% reading silently
- 32% understanding what they read
- 91% more confident in what they read

#### Post questionnaire

- 51% now like reading a lot more
- 47% like reading a little more
- 2% like reading not at all

#### Pre Questionnaire

- 20% liked reading a lot
- 74% liked reading a little
- 6% Did not like reading

#### *I now like to read:*

##### Post questionnaire

- 49% every day
- 45% once a week
- 6% once a month

##### Pre Questionnaire

- 42%
- 40%
- 16%

#### *I now read:*

##### Post questionnaire

- 52% at home more
- 34% more at school
- 7% more in the library
- 7% other

##### Pre Questionnaire

- 20%
- 46%
- 1%
- 33%

#### *My reading is now:*

##### Post questionnaire

- 31% good
- 40% excellent
- 22% okay
- 2% not as good as I'd like
- 4% could be better
- 1% N/A

##### Pre Questionnaire

- 41%
- 3%
- 28%
- 19%
- 7%
- 2% N/A

#### *I would now like to read more*

##### Post questionnaire

- 84% yes
- 16% No

##### Pre Questionnaire

- 75%
- 25%

*91% would like to take part in a Paired Reading Project again.*

### **Attitude to Reading**

All participating schools reported an improvement in attitudes to reading. Students began to recommend good books to each other and were all very eager to practice reading in order to be fully prepared for the sessions. Students were motivated by the role of tutor and willingly practiced their reading in readiness for the reading sessions. These are some of the quotes and comments from the evaluation/questionnaires and observational logs. The teachers noted the impact the project had on the students.

*Importance of reading brought to centre stage conscious that they needed to be good readers to be good tutors.*

*They talked about the books and recommended them to each other, based on the primary students' opinions.*



*They saw that reading could be fun.*

*I feel the project generated a new attitude to reading.*

*Due to preparatory work the 2nd level students became very motivated to read well and wanted to practice a lot.*

*They recommended good books to each other and discussed stories after each session.*

*They enjoyed the books & took more of an interest in books in their own class.*

*They talked about the project, how well their tutee was doing, took a pride in the amount of books read.*

*That learning to read was at the heart of an interesting, enjoyable, sociable and self-esteem-raising activity. That doesn't happen too often in an academic subject for our students.*

### **Students were reading more**

According to the teachers and the students themselves they were reading more at school and at home. Many reported that the students were borrowing from the school or local library and many reported that they were now reading to their younger siblings.

*I liked helping kids to read. Help us both in our reading.....I could read with my little brother and sister.*

It was also first time they had been very eager to go to school library.

*.....another girl told me that the book she had borrowed was great and that it made her cry. It was a book in diary format about a young girls experience on the Titanic. She asked then for a similar read but one that wouldn't be so sad.*

*They have shown an increased interest in the book box in class ...some have even brought books outside of the class...some students even bought books.*

*all but one of the girls have borrowed books from the library.*

### **Reading Aloud in Class Improved**

A notable finding from the teacher questionnaires and the observational logs was that all teachers interviewed highlighted the impact of the project on the reading levels in the class room, reporting that students were more inclined to ask for help. Teachers consistently reported that the students were noticeably more inclined to and more confident in, reading aloud in class. Teachers also noticed that the students were reading more, this is corroborated by the students' responses to the questionnaires as was the improvement in reading aloud.

*It gave me confidence to read in front of people and read aloud and not to be scared of reading in front of a crowd.*

All teachers [in one school] agreed that the project impacted on the reading of textbooks positively.

*They asked their English teacher if they could study another novel in class - that was a major achievement.*

*They seemed to become more aware of the reading skills they do have, rather than their weak areas.*

*By reading the books before they went up to the primary their reading skills improved.*

*JCSP students are more confident in the actual English class and pride themselves in their ability to help the younger students.*

*The project has made the pupils aware of another technique that can be used for reading.*

*They have experienced reading as a fun activity. They know that getting stuck on a word means little. Reading has become a more accessible activity for them.*

## 2. Self Esteem

Quite significantly all of the participating schools commented on the improvement in self-esteem among the second year students participating in the project:

*They gained in self confidence, both in regard to reading and in a general sense.*

*Their confidence and self-esteem grew noticeably, they did not want to miss a session.*

*One student commented.... I liked it, the only thing is I would like to read with the same girl because she gave me confidence and I gave her confidence.*

## 3. Role of Tutor

All participating schools commented on the value of the role of tutor as the students took on their role very responsibly. They enjoyed and looked forward to the reading sessions. They enjoyed the status of being a tutor in school and regarded it highly. They really looked forward to the sessions and took on a very caring protective attitude to the younger students.

*They had a great sense of responsibility towards their "tutees". It underlined for them the importance of reading well. They also tried to anticipate the problems that the tutees might have.*

*They had control over a learning situation for the first time.*

*Very keen to amass a large number of books read.*

*The JCSP students took their role very seriously. If asked by other students why they were lined up at the gate instead of for class, they matter-of-factly and very proudly stated that they were 'tutors' helping kids to read.*

*Seeing the 2nd year students blossom, it was really moving at times to see the care they took with the primary students.*

*To see the interest the pupils had in helping each other. There was a real buzz in the classroom when the project was taking place.*

*The best part of the project was seeing my friend get his book finished.*

Through the questionnaires it was ascertained that the students' favourite part of the project was the actual reading with the junior students (not the time off usual class!)

*I enjoyed reading with ..... and nearly every day I went down. We had a chat before we started about the day and what we did at the weekend. He was an excellent student and reader and I enjoyed working with him and hope to see more of him in the future.*



*It was enjoyable, it wasn't boring like I thought it would have been.*

Not only could they appreciate the success the young students were having but they began to see that it was linked to their positive inputs. They took great ownership of the successful learning of the young students.

*Teachers.... As the project went on the tutors could see that their involvement was making a difference.*

*They began to see that the success of the project was as a result of their own efforts and hard work.*

*Students... Good to feel wanted and needed.*

*...meant a lot to me in an educational way. I gained confidence in myself. It takes patience because they might be a bit slower than you at reading. We were all well behaved. We were always on time. We were mature walking from school to school. ....to be a good tutor like myself you should be mature, responsible and full of confidence.....*

### **Behaviour**

Many schools commented on the improvement on behaviour of the students because of the role of tutor.

*Students with behavioural and social skills difficulties were involved in the project and as a result of being involved in the project showed marked improvement.*

According to the students:

*We were mature walking to the school*

*We had good manners*

*You have to have a lot of patience with the younger ones*

### **Linkage with Primary Schools**

The majority of schools commented on the positive impact on linkages with the primary schools:

*Making a link with the primary school was a very positive PR exercise particularly as the project went so well. The primary pupils really enjoyed reading in this manner and our pupils caused no problems within the primary school while on their visits.*

### **Attendance**

A noteworthy impact of the project was on the attendance of the second level students particularly mentioned by 11 of the 13 schools:

*Attendance generally very good for all sessions commitment taken seriously.*

### **View of Project**

The students really enjoyed and benefited from the project. All teachers reported that the students had a positive attitude to the project.

*They really enjoyed the project and they wanted it to continue.*

*The excitement and enthusiasm showed by both groups was amazing. The novelty of the project never wore off and they had selected their reading materials before we arrived.*

*They would love to do it again.*

*Student voice... All the people who took part enjoyed the project and would love to do it again.*

### Impact on the Primary School Students

Although the focus of this study was on the improvements of the tutor/the second level students, all schools noted that the programme benefited the primary students as well. 90% of the schools reported that the students benefited both with an improved attitude to reading as well as increased confidence and social skills from the interaction with the second level students. 70% commented that the status of the older students being associated with reading made reading itself 'cool'.

#### 1. Improved attitude to reading

*Saw reading as a pleasurable, non-threatening activity.*

*Feedback from parents suggested that the primary students became much more interested in reading at home. Reading abilities greatly improved. Teenage boys provided a role model for the young boy tutees. Reading was seen to be cool.*

*The Paired Reading meant reading was a fun activity for these pupils. It wasn't seen as an activity through which they would struggle. They could read aloud in a non-threatening and non-judgmental environment. They appeared to become more confident in their reading. This observation was also noted by their teacher. The positive encouragement and affirmations really worked well. Discussing the illustrations and using them to find objects or characters mentioned in the text was also an activity the pupils enjoyed.*

*It improved their reading and confidence about reading.*

*They recommended books to each other.*

*Their reading became more accurate and their pronunciation of words became clearer. Their social skills developed through listening and communicating.*

*Reading became a focus at the start of each day. Children handled books which were glossy, colourful, new and bought for them specially. Throughout the day children went to the book shelf to take a book out. During the classes they mentioned information they had gotten from reading the books. They all wanted the project to continue and really missed their 'teacher'.*

#### 2. Social Skills improvement

*Improved social skills of two particular pupils working and interacting with other pupils.*

*It improved their social skills.*

#### 3. Linking with the second level school

The positive link the project created was mentioned by most.

*It gave them a link with the secondary school which is very important in a town with a large drop-out rate.*

*Like the senior students they really enjoyed it and didn't want it to end.*

*In the case of one school the students continued using the Paired Reading technique themselves.*

*One nice observation was seen by the class teacher when two juniors continued the idea of paired reading between themselves, a stronger reader reading to a weak reader quite naturally.*



## **New Books**

The addition of the new books caused great excitement and interest, they were kept in the Junior classroom, and the library became a focal point in room. The primary students enjoyed the individual attention. They were eager to tell how many pages/books they had read. They stopped the teachers involved to ask if it was on that day.

## **Recommendations**

There were some aspects that the project co-ordinators identified that they would do differently if they were to run a similar project again. While four schools reported that every aspect of the project went well:

*Everything went well with this initiative from beginning to end. It was a very enjoyable project all through.*

*Everything went very well due to 3 main factors. We had a very co-operative 2nd year group. The primary school were extremely supportive. The 2nd level teachers were very supportive and gave free time up gladly to the project*

The aspects that individual schools would change next time included:

### **Certificates**

- offer more colourful certificates to the students.

### **Record Keeping**

- Change how the records were kept, getting the tutors to keep the records rather than the project co-ordinator.

### **Time and Venue**

- Others would change both the time of year and the time of day that they ran the project changing to the first term and run the project earlier in the day.
- Many second year students felt that the time was inadequate: in the case of two schools they would change the venue to the second level school and another would look for a bigger venue.

### **Discussion**

- Some would ensure that there would be more encouragement of discussion between the students.

### **Planning**

- Two schools felt that more planning would have been beneficial.
- One school noted the difficulty one particular tutor had with the reading and felt that care would have to be taken that such a student got plenty of support.

### **Behaviour of Younger Students**

- Another found the behaviour of the younger students a difficulty and would make a point of ensuring that the younger students had a better behaviour record in future.
- According to one student next time we should: "Have a table on our own to read would make less distractions for little ones...."

All kids reported to want to continue going on longer.

### Successes

When asked if the schools would run a similar project again all schools stated that they plan to run a Peer Tutoring Project again next year. 7 already had plans in place to run the same Cross Age Peer Tutoring Project. Some of the primary schools requested that a similar project would be put in place the following year.

Others had variations on how they would run the project next time:

- Same Age Peer Tutoring
- 3rd years with 1st years
- LCA students with 1st years
- 5th years with juniors
- One school has put plans in place to use the trained 2nd year students when they are in 5th year to tutor the 1st years.

### *How the second year students took on their role*

Most schools involved commented on the positive manner in which the students took on the role of tutor:

*Seeing the enthusiasm of all involved. Presentation night the students were delighted with their certificates we designed.*

*They [the teachers] were impressed and amazed at how responsibly the students took on the task. It ran smoothly and effortlessly.*

*The atmosphere and buzz created around the project. The caring and responsible attitude of the seniors to the juniors, the obvious enhanced self-esteem of seniors, their confidence renewed interest in books as something "COOL".*

### *Self Image and Confidence*

All schools commented on the improvement in confidence and self worth as a result of being involved in the project:

*The most important gain for our students as a result of the project was the self-esteem they developed from the self-worth they experienced. They had a great feeling of being needed.*

*In my view the best part of the project was the benefit to the 2a students. It really improved their confidence levels, their self-image and their views about reading. They were really enthusiastic more than I have ever seen there before. This was reflected in their school attendance and in the positive way they spoke about the project. Neither they, nor the primary school students wanted the project to end and that's a testament to how successful it was! I cannot praise it enough.*

The best part of the project according to a student was:

*The feeling of success and self belief felt by the JCSP students.*

*The excitement and level of anticipation every single morning from both groups of students.*



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## Appendix 1 - Junior Certificate School Programme: Cross Age Peer Tutoring Research Project 2003

This is a very exciting project which emanated out of the research projects last term on Paired Reading. Research would indicate that Paired Reading makes a significant impact on literacy levels. The intensive, positive, one to one tutoring means that the younger reader makes great strides. An interesting aspect of the research also indicates that not only does the younger reader make strides but so too does the tutor. Indeed, the tutor, they say, often gains even more from the situation both in terms of literacy and socially.

With this in mind we have initiated this project which involves 2nd year students teaming up with 2nd class students for Paired Reading. We will hope to measure the improvement in reading, attitudes to reading as well as social skills development with both parties.

The project will therefore involve the following:

- Training the 2nd year students in the Paired Reading technique.
- Training the 2nd year students in how to conduct themselves in the role of tutor in the primary school which will include issues of confidentiality, behaviour, positive learning, affirmation and celebration.
- Training in how to introduce Paired Reading to the younger students, choose appropriate reading materials and how to work with them during the session.
- The project will run for between 6-8 weeks, at least two times per week.
- Negotiating when this can occur with the primary schools.
- It will involve pre and post testing using standardised tests for both parties.

**It will involve pre and post questionnaires around attitudes to reading as well as social skills development.**

### Some suggestions as to how the subvention could be spent

- To pay substitution to release key teachers to implement the project and to administer the tests
- To buy appropriate books
- To train the tutors
- To transport the students to the primary school
- To fund refreshments
- To photograph the event
- To celebrate the completion of the event



## Appendix 2 - Junior Certificate School Programme: Planning a Cross Age Peer Tutoring Project

**What is the aim of the project?**

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**What is the objective of the project?**

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### *Support*

Who will help: colleagues   
outside agencies

What will their role be?

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### *Funding*

How do you plan to use the subvention money?

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Do you need funding for: additional reading materials   
certificates   
prizes   
refreshments

## Tutors

### Selection of Tutors

How will you choose your 2nd year tutors?

Do they volunteer?

Whole class training / two groups

Criterion for being accepted as responsible tutors

### Training of Tutors

#### When?

Class time

Outside of class time

Date / time / place

#### How long?

4-5 hours

How broken up?

Who will train them?

### Will you need AudioVisual equipment?

#### Where?

Space for practice?

### Content of Training

- Demonstration
- Verbal instruction
- Practice and material
- Individual tutees
- "How to do it" training material
- Value
- Record keeping
- Selection of reading material
- Role of tutor
- Commitment and confidentiality contract
- First meeting
- Organisation
- Assessment

### Roles of tutors

1. Main tutors for individual matching
2. Substitutes
3. Administrators - control, records etc.
4. Librarians
5. General helpers
6. Attendance Co-ordinator

### Certificates for Tutors

#### Criterion for receiving Certificates

- Full attendance at training
- Completed arrangements
- Commitment
- Other

### What certificates / What wording?

#### Who presents?

#### When presented?

#### Parents

- How are parents of tutors informed?
- When?

## Tutees

### Who?

- How selected?
- Numbers
- Other

### When

How do you outline project?

- Newsletter
- Meeting
- Announcement

### Parents

- How do you inform parents?
- When?

### Matching of tutors / tutees

- Relationship - child choice?
- How offered?
- How much accepted?

### Substitutes - available to cover absences

### How will tutor / tutees be introduced?

### Opportunities to practice together

## Books

### Readability

- Controlled / not

### Choosing

- Who / how freely?

### Sources

- Library / specially bought
- Home / public
- Library / resource room



## Access

### Where started?

### Who controls returns?

### System

### Storage

- Where kept?
- How retrieved efficiently?

## Monitoring

### Observation

- By whom?
- How recorded?

### Self recording

- by tutor
- by tutee
- both

### Discussion

### Meetings

## Status of project

### School / Teacher perceptions

### Child perception

## Organisation of contact

### Time

- Breaktime / lunch
- Classtime
- After school - fixed

## Place

### Duration

- 15, 20, 30 minutes

### Frequency

- 3, 4, 5, weekly

## Project Period

- 6, 8, 10 weekly

Consider possible starting dates, position of school holidays, other school events etc.

## Technique

- Paired Reading
- Silent Reading
- Reading Together
- Self Correction
- Variants of Above
- Comprehension
- Book Reviewing

## Link with other Projects

- Support Teachers
- Readathon
- Literacy Day
- Readalong
- Outside Agencies

## Evaluation

- Base Line Testing - what test other than NFER?
- Control group for comparison
- How to collate information
- Normative testing
- Qualitative testing - error analysis etc.
- Subjective view
- Monitoring structure and organisation and efficiency of project
- Other - frequency of reading, increased interest, number of books read

## Feedback

- To children
- How verbal?
- Acknowledgement of success
- Commendations of tutees - written, awards etc.
- From Children Group / Individual
- Tutor and Tutee together
- Statements

## Appendix 3 - Outline of Training

### General Welcome and Introduction

- Demonstration by two teachers: How not to do it
- Demonstration by two teachers: How to do it
- Video of how to do it
- Talk and discussion on Paired Reading and its value
- How to do it guidelines for tutors - step by step instructions
- Try it out - tutors together. Guided practice in pairs and feedback.
- Record keeping
- Selection of reading material
- Role of tutor outside of reading
- Commitment and confidentiality
- Discussion throughout
- Choice of role and contract
- Certification



## Appendix 4 - Junior Certificate School Programme: Literacy Research Projects - Teacher Questionnaire

### Cross Age Peer Tutoring Project: 2003

*To be completed by the teachers involved with the 2nd year students*

School \_\_\_\_\_

Subject/s taught to students involved in this Initiative \_\_\_\_\_

No. of class contact hours with project students \_\_\_\_\_

#### 1. What do you hope your students will achieve through participating in this initiative?

- Improvement in reading ability
- Development of comprehension skills
- Development of reading for pleasure traits
- Greater willingness to read
- Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

#### 2. Would you say your students enjoy reading?

- A lot
- A little
- Not at all

#### 3. Do they read for pleasure?

- At home
- At school
- In the library
- Other

#### 4. How do your students find out information?

- Library
- Computer / Internet
- Teacher
- Textbook
- Newspapers
- Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

#### 5. What reading tasks do your students enjoy?

- Being read to
- Reading out loud
- Reading silently
- Reading with others
- Books on tape
- Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

**6. Which of the following do your students like to read?**

- Comics
- Magazines
- Newspapers
- TV guides
- Manuals
- Novels
- Other (please specify)

**7. Which of the following represents the type of reading activity most common in your class?**

- Silent reading
- Reading out loud
- Working in twos with text
- Following text read aloud by teacher
- Other (please specify)

**8. Can the students read the textbooks in use in your subject?**

- Yes
- No

**9. How significant is the difficulty with reading in your subject area?**

- Very significant
- Moderately significant
- Not at all significant

**10. What would help your students to improve their reading?**

*(If more than one please number in order of importance)*

- More suitable materials
- Individual help during withdrawal
- Smaller class
- Second teacher in the classroom
- Parental help with reading
- Time to practise reading in class
- Subject teachers involved in supporting reading
- Up-skilling of subject teachers in strategies to support literacy
- Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_



## Appendix 5 - Junior Certificate School Programme: Cross Age Peer Tutoring Literacy Research Projects - Teacher Questionnaire

### Post Reading Project

School \_\_\_\_\_

*Please consider the following specifically in relation to the cross age peer tutoring project.....*

#### 4. Identify what your students have achieved through participating in this project?

- Improvement in reading ability
- Development of comprehension skills
- Development of reading for pleasure traits
- Greater willingness to read
- Improved attitude to reading
- Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

#### 5. Would you say your students now enjoy reading?

- A lot more
- A little more
- Still not at all

#### 6. Do they now read for pleasure?

- At home more
- At school more
- In the library more
- Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

#### 4. As a result of the JCSP Reading Project how do your students now find out information?

- Library
- Computer / Internet
- Teacher
- Textbook
- Newspapers
- Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

**Is there any evidence to indicate an improvement in information sourcing skills?**

---



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**7. Identify ways in which your students enjoyment of reading has been enhanced as a result of the reading project. Do they now enjoy any of the following activities:**

*For the 1st time*    *More than before*

- |                          |                          |                              |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Being read to                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Reading out loud             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Reading silently             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Reading with others          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Books on tape                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Other (please specify) _____ |

**8. Which of the following do your students now like to read?**

*For the 1st time*    *More than before*

- |                          |                          |                              |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Comics                       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Magazines                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Newspapers                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | TV guides                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Manuals                      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Novels                       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Other (please specify) _____ |

**7. Which of the following represents the type of reading activity now most common in your class?**

- Silent reading
- Reading out loud
- Working in twos with text
- Following text read aloud by teacher
- Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

**8. Has the JCSP Reading Project helped the students to read the textbooks in use in your subject?**

- Yes
- No



## 9. What additional or extended strategies would help your students to improve their reading?

*(If more than one please number in order of importance)*

- More suitable materials
- Individual help during withdrawal
- Smaller class
- Second teacher in the classroom
- Parental help with reading
- Time to practise reading in class
- Subject teachers involved in supporting reading
- Up-skilling of subject teachers in strategies to support literacy
- Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

## 10. How has the students' attitude towards reading improved/changed, if at all, as a result of the reading project?

- Reading more
- Reading for enjoyment
- Interest in reading
- Enjoying reading
- Purchasing books/reading materials
- Asking to read
- Looking for interesting books/reading materials
- Bringing books/reading materials home
- More confidence displayed in reading in class
- More confidence displayed in reading aloud in class
- Attending paired reading session regularly if involved
- Talking about books/reading materials
- Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

## 11. Has the JCSP Reading Project impacted on the students' attitude to school?

*Please Circle*

1      2      3      4      5      6      7      8      9      10

*Not at all*

*Extensively*

*In what ways, if at all* \_\_\_\_\_

**12. Has the JCSP Reading Project impacted on the students' overall learning?***Please Circle*

1    2    3    4    5    6    7    8    9    10

*Not at all**Extensively**In what ways, if at all* \_\_\_\_\_**13. Would you now consider introducing some element of pair work in your classroom?***Please Circle*

1    2    3    4    5    6    7    8    9    10

*Not at all**Extensively**In what ways, if at all* \_\_\_\_\_**14. Did this project afford you any insights into the value of Peer Tutoring that you may not already have had?***Please Circle*

1    2    3    4    5    6    7    8    9    10

*Not at all**Extensively**In what ways, if at all* \_\_\_\_\_**15. How has the JCSP Reading Project impacted upon your teaching methodologies?***Please Circle*

1    2    3    4    5    6    7    8    9    10

*Not at all**Extensively**In what ways, if at all* \_\_\_\_\_**Any other comments:****16. Please identify any additional support/ information/materials you would find useful.**

Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire.



## Appendix 6 - Junior Certificate School Programme: Primary School Student Questionnaire

The questions should be read aloud by the teacher:

### 1. I like reading

- a lot                       a little                       not at all

### 2. I like to read

- every day                       never  
 once a week                       once a month

### 3. I read

- at home                       at school                       other

### 4. I like to read

- books about people                       comics                       magazines  
 stories                       TV guides                       Books about making things

### 5. My reading is

- good                       excellent                       okay  
 not as good as I'd like                       could be better

### 6. I would like to read more

- yes                       no

### 7. I like being read to

- yes                       no

### 8. In class I prefer reading

- silently                       out loud

### 9. The best thing I read was

---

---

---

**10.I enjoyed having a reading partner**

- a lot                       a little                       not at all

**11.The books were**

- Brilliant                       Very good  
 Good                       Not good

**12.I enjoyed having the chance to read more**

- a lot                       a little                       not at all

**13.I now like reading**

- a lot more                       a little more                       about the same

**14.I now like to read**

- every day                       never  
 once a week                       once a month

**15.I now read**

- at home                       at school                       other

**16.I now like to read**

- books about people                       comics                       magazines  
 stories                       TV guides                       Books about making things

**17.My reading is now**

- a lot better                       a little bit better                       about the same

**18.I would like to read more**

- yes                       no

**19.I now like being read to**

- yes                       no

**20.In class I prefer reading**

- silently                       out loud

**21.I would like to continue with paired reading**

- yes                       no



**22. One thing that would make paired reading better**

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---

---

---

**23. My favourite part of paired reading was**

---

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---

---

**24. The best thing I read was**

---

---

---

---

**Thank you very much for taking the time to fill in this form.**

## Appendix 7 - Junior Certificate School Programme: Second Level Student Questionnaire

### 25.I like reading

- a lot                       a little                       not at all

### 26.I like to read

- every day                       never  
 once a week                       once a month

### 27.I read

- at home                       at school  
 in the library                       other

### 28.I like to read

- books about people                       comics                       magazines  
 newspapers                       stories                       TV guides  
 manuals

### 29.The best thing I read was

---



---



---

### 30.My reading is

- good                       excellent                       okay  
 not as good as I'd like                       could be better

### 31.I would like to read more

- yes                       no

### 32.When I have to read a word I don't know I

- skip it                       guess                       read all the sentence  
 ask for help                       sound it out

**33.I would like extra help with reading from**

- teacher                       family member  
 older student                 other

**34.I like being read to**

- yes                       no

**35.In class I prefer reading**

- silently                 out loud

**36.I know how to send email**

- yes                       no

**37.I have an email address**

- yes                       no

**38.I often send text messages**

- yes                       no

**39.I have a pen-pal / e-pal**

- yes                       no

## Appendix 8 - Junior Certificate School Programme: Senior Student Questionnaire

### Post Peer Tutoring Project

School \_\_\_\_\_

#### 1. What was your favourite part of the Peer Tutoring Project?

- Being trained
- Reading with the primary students
- Being a tutor
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

#### 2. Did the training prepare you for the Paired Reading?

- Yes
- More or less
- No
- Comments \_\_\_\_\_

#### 3. Is there anything else you would have liked in the training?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

#### 4. Did you like being a tutor?

- Yes
- Kind of
- No
- Comments \_\_\_\_\_

#### 5. Tick the areas where you feel you yourself have made progress during the JCSP Peer Tutoring Project:

- Reading aloud
- Reading silently
- Understanding what you have read
- More confident about giving your views on what you have read

#### 6. I now like reading

- a lot more
- a little more
- not at all



### 7. I now like to read

- everyday
- never
- once a week
- once a month

### 8. I now read

- at home more
- at school more
- in the library more
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

### 9. I have now begun to read

- books about people
- comics
- magazines
- newspapers
- stories
- TV guides
- manuals

### 10. The best part of Project was:

---

---

---

### 11. My reading is now

- good
- excellent
- okay
- not as good as I'd like
- could be better

### 12. I would now like to read more

- yes       no

### 13. When I now have to read a word I don't know I

- skip it
- guess
- read all the sentence
- ask for help
- sound it out

**14. I would like extra help with reading from**

- teacher
- family member
- older student
- other

**15. I now like being read to**

- yes
- no

**16. In class I now prefer reading**

- silently
- out loud

**17. I now know how to send email**

- yes
- no

**18. I now have an email address**

- yes
- no

**19. I often send text messages now**

- yes
- no

**20. I now have a pen-pal / e-pal**

- yes
- no

**21. I found the project helpful, because**

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---

---

*Not helpful, because*

---

---

---

**22. Would you like to take part in a similar Reading Project in the future?**

- yes
- no



**23. What part of the Reading Project should change next time?**

---

---

---

*Why?*

---

---

---

**24. What part of the Reading Project should stay the same next time?**

---

---

---

*Why?*

---

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**Thank you for taking the time to fill out this form.**

## Appendix 9 - Junior Certificate School Programme: Evaluation of Cross Age Peer Tutoring

### Project 2003

*Please note that it would be great if this could be sent on floppy disc or emailed to [jcsp@iol.ie](mailto:jcsp@iol.ie)*

#### 1. Number of students involved

- 1st year students
- 2nd year students
- Primary school students
- Class group/s

Reasons for choosing these students:

---

#### 2. Date when the project began

---

#### 3. Training

*Who trained the students?*

---

*What materials were used (please append a copy of any materials used)*

---

---

*When did the training take place?*

---

*How long did the training take (number of hours)*

---

*Describe the training process involved in training the 2nd year students:*

---

---

---



#### 4. Test information

*Tests used with senior students*

NFER Nelson Group Reading Test

---

**Tests used with junior students**

NFER Nelson Group Reading Test

---

**Please provide the summary of test results including chronological age of students etc.**

*Did you get help with administration and marking?*

yes     no

*Any difficulties encountered?*

---

*Any comments about the reading tests?*

---

*Any general comments about the reading ages pre and post project - were they what you expected etc. (taking into account that because this is not a sensitive instrument some students may indeed get a lower score 2nd time around!)*

---



---



---

#### 5. Primary School

*Please describe how you engaged the primary school in the project*

---



---



---

*Were there any problems at this stage?*

---



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---

## 6. Organisation

*Start date of reading sessions*

---

*Number of weeks*

---

*Number of days per week (was it the same every week - please be reasonably precise)*

---

*Where did they meet?*

---

*How did the project fit in with the students' timetable?*

---

*Did the project complement any work going on in school?*

---

*What was the project called?*

---

*What was the student's role called?*

---

## 7. First meeting

*How did you plan for the first meeting of the students?*

---

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---

*How did the first meeting go?*

---

---

---



*If you were doing it again would you do anything differently - if so why?*

---

---

---

---

## 8. Sessions

*What were the best sessions you observed?*

---

List 3 reasons why it went well, if possible.

1. 

---
2. 

---
3. 

---

*What were the worst sessions?*

---

List 3 reasons why it went like this, if possible.

1. 

---
2. 

---
3. 

---

*Did the students seem to like or dislike the role of tutor? How do you know?*

yes    no

How do you know?

1. 

---
2. 

---
3. 

---

*Did the juniors like or dislike having a reading tutor?*

yes    no

How do you know?

1.

2.

3.

*Describe the logistics of bringing the two groups together regularly*

---

---

---

**9. Benefits to senior students**

**What in your opinion were the benefits, if any, to the JCSP senior students?**

Give details of what worked well. Include any observations you may have as to improvements in reading habits, if any, or observations about changing reading habits etc.

*Buy own books, Recommend books to each other. Talk about the books, Improved self esteem, Positive view of reading etc.*

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**10. Benefits to Primary students**

*What in your opinion were the benefits if any to the Primary students? Give details of what worked well. Include any observations you may have as to improvements in reading habits if any...*

---

---

---

---

*On average how many books were read?*

---



## 11. Books

*Please list the books bought i.e. the series and append a list of the books if at all possible.*

---

---

---

*Was it easy enough to find suitable materials?*

---

*Which books were the best?*

---

---

---

*Please also note any disasters!*

---

*Where were the books stored? Any good ideas for storage?*

---

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---

## 12. Challenges

*What did not go well? Why?*

---

---

---

*What would you do differently if you were to run the project again?*

---

---

---

### 13. Positives

*What was the best part of the project in your opinion?*

---

---

---

*Would you run the project again?*

yes    no

### 14. School

*What did other teachers think of the project? Were they supportive/helpful?*

---

---

---

*Would you have any further plans for any form of peer tutoring in you school?*

---

---

---

**Please include details of how the subvention was spent.**

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

School: \_\_\_\_\_

**Thank you for taking the time to give us an insight into Cross Age Peer Tutoring in your school. If you have any ideas or other comments regarding the project, we would be glad to hear them. We would also be delighted with any photographs you may have of the students involved in the project which could be included in the final report.**



## Appendix 10 - Junior Certificate School Programme: Cross Age Peer Tutoring Project

**Curriculum Development Unit, Dublin 12**

**Fax:** 01 402 0435

*From:*

*School:* \_\_\_\_\_

### How are things

*Number of Junior students involved:*

1st year \_\_\_\_\_

2nd year \_\_\_\_\_

*Number of primary students*

\_\_\_\_\_

*Length of training:*

*Dates:*

\_\_\_\_\_

*Who did the training?*

\_\_\_\_\_

*When did the paired reading session commence?*

\_\_\_\_\_

*How many times per week?*

\_\_\_\_\_

*What is the finish date?*

\_\_\_\_\_

*How do you intend to celebrate the finish?*

---

*What teachers operate the programme?*

---

*Where does it take place?*

---

*How do you broadly intend spending the subvention?*

---

---

---

*Have you put enough aside for writing up the research?*

---

*Who will write up the findings?*

---

*Is there anything the support service can do at this stage to help?*

---

---

**Signed:**

---



## Appendix 11 - Re: JCSP Cross Age Peer Tutoring Research Project

13th January 2003

**Dear Co-Ordinator,**

A Happy New Year to you and your team.

Thank you for your application to participate in the *JCSP Cross Age Peer Tutoring Research Project*. There were only a limited number of schools able to participate in this project which involved 2nd year students matched with 2nd class primary school students. However, it was clear from your application that you are interested in Cross Age Peer Tutoring involving senior students, and so we are delighted to inform you that the team has agreed to fund your initiative with a subvention of €500. €500 has been forwarded to your Principal.

**Please note that this money will have to be receipted and all receipts returned to me in relation to this particular initiative.** A form is enclosed where you can record your outgoings and attach your original receipts before returning them to me. Additionally, it is hoped should you participate in the project, that you would agree to evaluate the project and supply us with a written report. It maybe useful to consider this in how you plan to use the subvention. It would be encouraged to use a proportion on the evaluation.

A copy of our guidelines for setting up a Peer Tutoring Project is included for your reference.

A standardised test to pre test the students' literacy levels will be available to your school. The logistics of running the project as well as the evaluation of the project can be discussed with your regional development officer in the near future. We would greatly appreciate it if you could complete and return the enclosed planning fax reply which will help us in supporting your initiative.

Please feel free to ring me with regard to the planning of the project. I would be delighted to talk it through with you.

Yours sincerely,

**Aideen Cassidy** (087 233 3839)  
National Co-ordinator  
Junior Certificate School Programme.

c.c. School Principal

## Appendix 12 - Ref: Peer Tutoring Research Projects

**4th February**

**Dear colleague**

I am delighted that your school is involved in this very exciting research project where we are putting the JCSP students in the central role of Tutors and I hope all is going well with your planning and training of the Tutors.

Please find enclosed a copy of a list of some reading suggestions Claire Kelly from Scoil Eoin, Crumlin has compiled for everyone's attention, as well as some guidelines that may be useful in your training. They may be of interest to you.

Feel free to give me a ring at any point to chat through how the project is going on 087 233 3839. If I'm not about leave a message and I'll get back to you.

Kind Regards

**Aideen Cassidy**

Junior Certificate School Programme



## Appendix 12 - Ref: Peer Tutoring Research Projects

4th April 2003

**Dear**

I hope everything is going well with your Cross Age Peer Tutoring Project. I trust at this stage that you have received all of the materials you need to set up and begin the implementation of the project. The following should now be underway:

- Completion of the planning pro forma (enclosed for your reference)
- Pre test 2nd year students and primary school students using the agreed NFER a/b or x/y tests
- Administer the pre questionnaire to 2nd year students
- Administer the pre questionnaire to 2nd class students
- Administer the pre questionnaire to teachers
- Maintain an observational log
- Keep all receipts of spending
- List of the books bought
- Plans for celebrating the project.

As discussed at our meeting I would urge you to keep an observational log where you jot down any observations you make or teachers'/students' comments. Often, in such a project one assumes that you will remember everything you notice, but so often by the end of the project you wish you had noted them down!

Additionally, by the nature of such a short term intervention we have noticed that although the test is the best we could find it is not sensitive enough to catch some of the improvements in such a short time, so the observational information is very valuable and indeed from a research point of view, just as valid.

I hope you have remembered to put some money aside from the subvention to fund the writing up of the findings - this is the purpose of the initiative so I would urge you to consider how much will be needed for the purpose:

- Will you need your classes covered while you write it up?
- Can you pay a secretary to input some information for you?
- Can you pay another to write up the results for you?

The purpose of the subvention is to ensure that the additional work involved in this research can be paid for through either supervising your classes or compensating for the time spent on writing up the project etc.

Please find enclosed the following:

- A fax reply to let me know how things are going (I'd appreciate it if you could send this to me by return)
- An article I came upon on the internet which you might find to be of an interesting background
- Some Reading Certificates you may wish to award
- A post initiative template for yourself to complete
- Post initiative senior student questionnaire
- Post initiative junior student questionnaire
- Post initiative teacher questionnaire
- Another form for recording receipts.

I will be in touch but it is often so much better if you could ring me - 087 233 3839 as it is often very difficult to contact you in school.

Please consider how I can support you in the final stages of the project.

Looking forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely

**Aideen Cassidy**

Junior Certificate School Programme





**Junior Certificate School Programme (JCSP) Support Service**

CDVEC Curriculum Development Unit, Captain's Road, Crumlin, Dublin 12.

**Phone:** 453 5487 **Email:** [jcsp@iol.ie](mailto:jcsp@iol.ie) **Web:** [www.jcsp.slss.ie](http://www.jcsp.slss.ie) / [www.jcspliteracy.ie](http://www.jcspliteracy.ie)