

2014

**“It’s all about the boys”**  
Premier League Reading Stars  
and Tom Palmer’s books



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## It's all about the boys

After completing my BA (hons) and focussing on boys' underachievement, I scoured the web for some inspiration or author, who would encourage and ignite boys imagination while focussing on specific areas such as: race, empathy and other relevant sensitive issues; as death and physical disabilities. Throughout 2011, I used some of the National Literacy Trust's evidence for my dissertation, in order to back up my findings such as gendered issues in the classroom and certain preferences towards reading. It was October 2012 that I came across Tom Palmer's books based on boys adventures based on intrigue and football.

While consulting with a YR six senior member of staff weekly, we (year 4 staff) targeted those individuals (yr four boys) who showed a lack in motivation towards reading, piloted a reading programme October 2012, and based on Tom Palmer's books: Black Ops and White Fear. Immediately, the boys became engrossed and using the five instalments I was able to offer a comprehension session which was timetabled once a week. These two hour sessions, were delivered in an environment that was 'boy friendly' and ensured we had refreshments but also delivered in a relaxed teaching style whereby they felt at ease.

During the four month programme, the group had showed positive signs towards Tom Palmer's stories of adventure. So much that high ability boys (yr 6) were approaching me and asking for different titles. This was excellent feedback from the boys.

April 2013 mid-term tests revealed that the boys reading scores had vastly increased with lowest increasing his reading age of 9 months and rising to 2years and 6 months!!!!.

The Premier League Reading Stars has been introduced with year five boys and commence our third fixture. My strategy with the PLRS is to keep the interest of reading using Tom Palmer but also encourage reading for a purpose while observing their favourite format towards reading, for example, books, iPad or Kindles, magazines, newspapers and magazines. What I have discovered is that boys love quizzes where they have to read a match report (20 minute reading time) and when posed questions, use the skill of skimming, scanning and finding key words.

My next fixture will introduce different formats of texts and ask them to choose from a range of different formats. Again, this will be interesting but vital towards how and why they have chosen their format.

<http://www.audleyjunior.co.uk/index.html>

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