

Therapeutic Story Writing (TSW) Groups in Reading Schools

Background

- Emotional & Mental Health are better predictors of academic outcomes than IQ.
- TSW provides children with an opportunity to explore their personalities and experiences in a safe way, through metaphor.** Indirect exploration of these matters helps the child to have a more stronger sense of self/identity and raises their awareness to possible support networks around them and this helps to improve children's resilience.
- Educational Psychologists (EPs) at Reading Borough Council are trained to deliver TSW groups.**

Methodology

Last academic year (2016-17), EPs delivered 6 TSW groups in Reading primary schools.

All groups were run by Educational Psychologists (EPs). Each group followed the TSW programme set out in Trisha Waters' training.

A repeated measures design was used to evaluate the children's perceptions of the impact of the TSW group. This included:

- An initial interview with participant to complete pre-intervention measures (T=1).
- 6-8 sessions of TSW.
- A follow up interview with the participant to complete post-intervention measures (T=2).

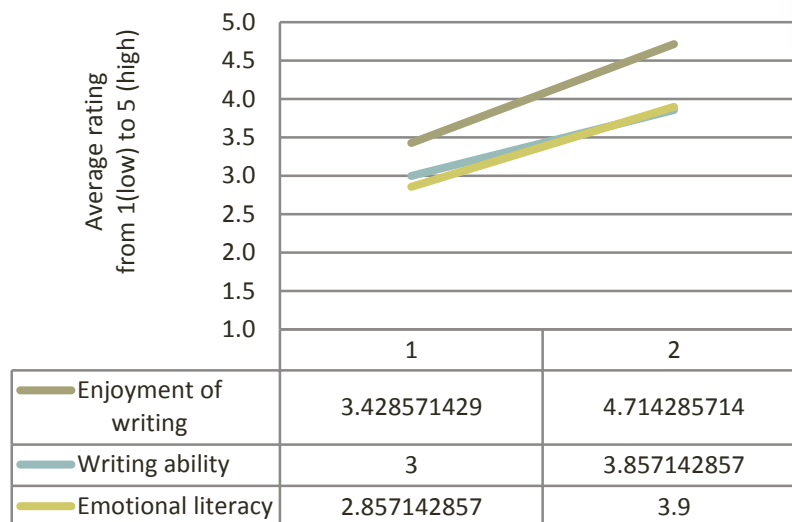
Using the TSW pre and post intervention measures, the children's views about the following were measured on a scale of 1 (low) to 5 (high):

- Enjoyment of writing.
- How good they think they are at writing (i.e. writing ability).
- How good that they think they are at talking about feelings, either those of their own or those of story characters (i.e. emotional literacy).

Other measures were collected (e.g. parents and class teacher's report of the children's emotional wellbeing and emotional literacy) but these are not summarised on this poster.

Results

The Change in Children's Perceptions over the TSW group



Conclusions/Next Steps

Children's perceptions of their writing ability, enjoyment of writing and their ability to talk about feelings improve over the course of a TSW group.

Reading EPs continue to offer TSW to Reading Schools as part of their service level agreement.

For more information, please contact Reading Borough Council's Educational Psychology Service (01189 376545)