

# Connectors: St Paul's Case Study

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## **Anthony David, Headteacher, St Paul's CE Primary School NW7 December 2013**

St Paul's, NW7, have been using the Connectors books to supplement our traditional reading schemes for the last academic year. We first became interested in the series for two reasons:

- a) It provided a range of non-fiction texts that addressed current themes
- b) It provided a clear structure to empower pupils to lead their learning

The initial impact was positive. Children enjoyed the title themes and were interested in the model. One child stated that he liked it because "I feel like we're in charge of our learning; we're the teachers."

From the teacher's point of view they were able to maintain support at appropriate ability levels (all of the Connectors books are banded with standard coloured book bands) but because the titles of age appropriate interest there wasn't a concern that children were being patronised. The books had universal interest from all abilities and were always a welcome aspect of reading.

Engagement is important from the child's point of view and from the class teacher's point of view it is more likely that engaged children are going to progress. Our focus group was pupils eligible to the Pupil Premium grant. What our data has shown is that all pupil within this group have made at least good progress in the last twelve months (which is 1.33 points progress per term, the average is 1.0) and in Year 3 the pupils made outstanding progress which is more than 1.33+ progress (one child made 2.33 points progress).

The resource was one part of a wider programme to improve reading but it is one of the key programmes that the children cite when they talk about enjoyment and what they feel has stretched their learning. The blend of ability appropriate reading, current and challenging themes that are child led have led to a deeper engagement with reading than we had experienced previously. It is interesting to note that the programme contributed to over 64% of Y6 achieving level 5 in reading this year.

I believe that this is a strong resource that challenges children to take responsibility of their learning and to engage with current and sometimes concerning themes in an intelligent way.