Gift of Words

New research* by Oxford University Press reveals the power of reading through the eyes of UK parents

Childhood memories

Two thirds (63%) of UK parents prefer to read their children books they enjoyed in their own childhood, rather than choosing newer titles.

Meaningful messages

66% of parents said they look for books that teach their child about wider society and have a meaningful message at their heart, while 64% of parents said reading to their child is an opportunity to discuss difficult or sensitive topics with them.

Family favourites

Parents named Roald Dahl as their favourite author to read to their child. Other favourites included Astrid Lingren’s Pippi Longstocking, Julia Donaldson, Michael Morpurgo, and Valerie Thomas and Korky Paul’s Winnie the Witch.

Continuing the reading journey

Ten years old was identified as the average age parents stop reading with their child. 61% of parents said they talk to their child about books outside of reading time and 67% said their child talks to them about the books they are reading independently.

Reading supports bonding

75% of parents said that reading to their child helps them to bond and connect with them, while 51% wish they had more time to read to their child.

More support required

1 in 5 (21%) never read to their child outside of school, with 2 in 6 (15%) saying they don’t have time, and a third (32%) worrying about their own reading abilities.

Find out more at OUP.com

*Survey conducted in December 2021 by Censuswide to approximately 1,000 parents across the UK.