

Female Interviewer¹: Last term you were taking part in the Narnian Virtues, so you're Year 8s aren't you?

Female respondent 1²: Yes.

FI: Is that the second book you did?

All: Yes.

FI: Just wondering what was it like to be part of it?

FR1: I think it was quite useful, I myself found it an enjoyable book to read, and it was really good, and you learn from your mistakes and think about how, for example, if someone else makes a mistake, you don't have to just always keep that in mind, you can just forgive them and move on.

FI: Anyone else?

Male Respondent 1: I think that the actual booklet that you do in classes useful, because it's not just, even though there's tasks to do, you can help improve your English as well, and it just improves your way of thinking about things.

Female Respondent 2: I think it was useful, the whole thing, and then you had the booklet, it was something different than just a normal English lesson, and it also just helped with virtues and stuff.

Male Respondent 2: I enjoyed the book, it was good to read as a class, and it also improved your reading out loud, and the activities booklet, I found it helped with my self-control, and also learning the differences between vices and virtues, and how you can improve.

FI: Is there anything you didn't like?

MR1: I think the booklet that you get given to do at home, for a lot of people they just generally can't do it because they might have to help their family, I just think that the one at home just isn't as helpful as the book that you do in class.

FR1: Yes, also adding on to his point, as it was an optional thing, you didn't have to do it, but it was something that you should have been doing, most people would just put it aside thinking, "It's optional, there's no reason to do it", but when it was actually in class, we all went through it, and it helped that way, rather than doing it at home.

¹ Interviewer

² Respondent

FR2: I think how we did, we did the same thing in Year 7 and Year 8, just with different books, so I think if it had been a little bit, I don't know, just different things that we were doing.

FR1: Doing different activities.

FR2: Yes.

FI: We had some students in other schools saying they found it a bit repetitive, did you?

All: Yes.

MR2: And also when we had to find out vices and virtues and then write them up and then also write the definition, we'd do that for whole lessons, it would get a bit boring at some points.

FR1: Especially because it was for two years straight, so it wasn't like it had changed or anything, it was practically the same thing but different books and words.

FI: Did you enjoy one year more than the other?

MR1: I think I enjoyed this year, just because I think the book's more interesting, so it makes the activities more interesting, because it's just more enjoyable.

FR1: Yes, that's how I feel as well, I feel like the first year was not that serious, but then the second year, it was more enjoyable, like you were saying, with the books, and it was more serious, and you got to understand the vices and virtues more in depth.

FI: Did you feel like that as well?

MR2: I found that the book for this year was more interesting to read and the activities in class were more enjoyable, but I found the first year more enjoyable, because we haven't done the activities, so I didn't know what to expect, but this year it was more repetitive.

FR2: I think it was a bit more, and also last year, we got an introduction to it and you understood it more, so it helped you more this year I suppose.

FI: I spoke to some teachers just before I spoke to you and they said some people had done it already at primary school, had you?

FR2: No, I haven't done it.

FR1: We'd read the book, but we hadn't done it.

MI: You read The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe at primary school?



Some: Yes.

FI: Some of you did, some of you didn't?

One of the other things I was interested in, because actually what we're doing as well, because it's really useful what you're telling us, because we're going to create some resources to have at the end, and having you guys telling us what's good and what isn't is fantastic, but one thing I was wondering is, what do you think the curriculum was wanting to achieve? What do you think Narnian Virtues was wanting to achieve?

FR1: I think it was to teach people self-control, and how if there's something that you believe is not right, how to work through it, rather than just leaving it behind and trying to ignore it, and just leave it in the past, I think it was to show you how to work through things and forgive people.

MR1: I think it was the understanding of yourself but also everyone around you, for example, if you think something's happened to you, but you might get an unfair result or be injustice, and you just learn about things like that, and how to deal with everything like that.

FR2: I think it helps you to become a better person, and it just helps you if you've got problems and stuff, so it just helps you.

MR2: It shows you that there's a better way to resolve something than your first option, say if someone does something bad to you and then you want to get revenge, but then at the same time you don't, it's showing you that there's always a better option, which will then lead to better things, instead of what you were originally going to do.

FI: Do you think it achieved that?

Some: Yes.

FI: Do you feel it helped you?

All: Yes.

FI: That's really interesting to know that.

Why do you think your school introduced the Narnian Virtues? Why do you think they took part?

MR1: I think it's because we've got a lot of people who are quite diverse, and there's a lot of other schools around Leeds, all do the same thing, and here it's a bit different, so it's like a different way of learning.

FI: What do you think?

FR2: I think the same thing, most of the schools are the same type of people, learn the same type of things, for example, if someone different comes into the school, they won't be settled because they're different from everyone else, but our school is quite diverse, so everyone is from different countries and around the world, and this really showed how no matter what people are like you need to respect them, and if they make mistakes, then give them a second chance.

Some: Yes.

FI: That's really interesting, your school seems amazing I've just been in here for half an hour, but all this stuff you've got with restorative practice, are any of you involved?

All: Yes.

FI: Does everyone get involved?

MR1: You can.

FR2: You can, you'll tell your coach, "I want to be involved in it", she'll write your name down, and then you can go for a course and know what you need to do, and you get a badge on a lanyard.

FI: That sounds brilliant, I wish I had that at school myself.

Did you have any particular expectations when you heard you were doing the Narnian Virtues?

MR1: Probably not, because you don't really know what to expect, because if it's a book that you've never read before then it's probably going to be more interesting than if you're expecting, if it's The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe, if we're doing that again, then we'd probably expect it to just be different tasks, not a different book.

FR1: I think the same thing, for example, if in Year 7 they told us, "Next year we're going to read the same book, but different activities", we would know what to expect, I know it won't be as interesting as I knew that we would change.

MR2: In my class group you might read the book twice, which is good, but then at the same time you've already read it, but then you know what you're expecting, but then if we were doing a book, that would open your mind up to different things.

FR2: I think it was just like, you didn't know about it, but it was interesting once you got to know about it.

FI: That's good.

Out of interest, because we've had some teachers in different schools say that people found The Voyage of the Dawn Treader a lot, well some teachers have said that students found it harder to understand, and then some teachers said that people found it easy, there seems to be a mixed opinion among teachers, which did you feel?

FR1: I think for me, in my opinion it was quite easy, and if there was something, we'd just raise our hand and we would just ask our teacher, "What does this mean?", he would explain it to the whole class, so we all understand what it means, so it was quite easy.

FR2: I think I found it easier than The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe, because it was all one story, whereas The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe had different parts to it.

MR1: I found the other one easier because in the first book it's a lot more, I would say it's a lot more different, a lot of little stories going on, so this one is just easier to focus on.

MR2: I found the other one easier because I've already read it before, so then I knew what I was expecting, it refreshed my memory, and then because I'd also watched the movie, I got the story, and because I haven't read this book before, it got quite confusing at some points, but then you could just raise your hand up and then it was made clear.

FI: It sounds like your teacher is quite good at helping you, so you're all in the same class for English?

All: No.

FR2: I'm in a different class.

FI: Okay, so you've got different teachers and had different experiences?

FR2: Us three are in the same class, but she's in a different class.

FI: Is your experience similar to theirs?

FR2: Yes.

FI: So you think all the teachers talked about it and came up with the same sort of thing? We've kind of talked about this a bit already, about the character passport you took home, and you said it was an optional thing to do, did you?

MR1: Yes.

FI: Who did it? You can be completely honest.

FR2: I did one thing in it, and I think it was helpful, it's just that with all the other things that you have to do, it's quite hard to fit it in and stuff.

FI: Which bit did you do?

FR2: I did the, where it's a map or something, map of your life or something, it was like main events in your life and stuff, I can't remember what it was called though.

FI: I've actually forgotten what was in that book, so it's quite useful to know, in the booklet.

Did anyone else do anything at home?

MR2: I did the first few activities, but then it did get quite a lot, you did have to do a lot of things, say if we do it in Year 9, now we have more homework and things like that, and then it's a bit harder to fit it in.

MR1: Last year I did a lot more, but this year I just haven't really done any because there's just a bit more things to do at home in my life, and just homework and stuff.

FR1: I think the same thing, I remember in Year 7 that I did much more, I was much more enthusiastic to doing it, but now we get more homework, there's exams and stuff going on, I put that aside and have to get everything done first, and if I've got the time I'll do it, but if I don't then I can't.

FI: So you prioritise the things that you had to do?

FR1: Yes.

FI: I think you've sort of said this as well actually about, it would be good to hear a little bit more, if you think that some of the knowledge and skills you learnt in the classroom, if you applied it outside the classroom?

FR2: I think, for example, as we were learning about, we'd have a different topic for each lesson, so one topic would maybe be about justice, another would be self-control, and we would, in-depth, really go, our teacher would really explain it and how it could be used, and it just helped us in and out of school as well, to know that, how we can solve things without having to go violent.

FI: If anybody, if it's not too personal, has anyone got any examples on how they used it?

MR2: I used to get really annoyed with my sister for really small things, she always sings, she never stops, and then because she goes to choir most

of the week, she'd come back and sing, after I did that, I'd have more self-control, and would be more patient with her.

FI: Did anyone else have anything they wanted to share?

FR2: I think since then I've got much more patient, and I know when to, if for example there's someone who annoys me, that's quite little, I know how to put that aside and just stay patient.

MR1: I think the biggest one is self-control, because if something doesn't go your way, instead of not making a fuss out of it, you just go along with it, and you've just got to deal with it really, just control yourself.

FR1: I think it was helpful and stuff, and with siblings, it helped me as well, because when you just get a bit annoyed, it's easier to put it aside.

FI: That's interesting to know.

One thing that the virtues was aiming to do was to see if it affected students in three different ways, so there's the idea of the "Head", that you understood the virtues that you were learning about, the "Heart", that you wanted to make a change, and the "Hand", that you'd actually done it, do you think that happened for you? Because you've all given examples of how you have done it, do you feel that you have the experience of understanding it and then feeling you wanted to make a difference?

All: Yes.

MR1: Because I think you learned to understand it doing the booklet, and then you change because you start, it just becomes part of what you do, just controlling yourself and just being a bit more patient, stuff like that.

FR2: I think it helps that you learnt about it in class, and learnt from in the book, how they've dealt with it, and then it's easier to take away and do it yourself.

FR1: And as we spent quite, basically two years on it, we really understood what all the virtues and vices meant and what we could do rather than, for example, just getting a booklet, taking it home, and maybe not understanding half the things that were in there, or doing it for maybe a year, half a year, but as we done it for two years, it was really understanding, and we understood all the virtues and how you could change yourself with self-control and stuff.

MR2: I found the booklet for this year was more helpful because.

FI: Is this the classroom one or the home one?



MR2: The classroom one, because it really went into more detail with how you could actually do things, and then also because it was the second year and we were doing it more in class, say that someone got annoyed with someone in class, the teacher would remind them, because we'd have to write down what we would try to achieve in, try to achieve more, more self-control and things like that.

FI: One thing as well that the people who wrote the curriculum were thinking about was, do you think that parents are important in helping young people develop their characters?

FR2: Yes, I remember when we got the chance to come in and speak to the people, Narnian Virtues, and my dad was like, "We should go", because for example, what we do in school, like I said before, in Year 7 with the booklet, I would just sit down with my parents and they would go through everything with me and they were quite eager to help me out, and whenever there was an opportunity to do something with them, they would take it.

MR1: I think in Year 7 it definitely helped because in my class, in Year 7 we had, well it was not expected of us to do it, but it was good if you did do it, so then I did do a lot of stuff with my parents.

But I think for other people, if their parents have to work really late and stuff, it might not be as helpful, because they might not see their parents as much.

FI: Do you think those parents should still have an affect on how their kids develop their character?

MR1: Yes.

FR2: I think they'd still have an affect on it, and then also, if their kids have been learning it in school, it's easier for them to take it away, and then the parents can help, even if they haven't looked through the booklet and stuff.

FI: Do you feel the same on that?

MR2: Yes, but the thing is, when we would do the activities, the parents sign off, and if you've got people's parents working late, they might not be able to sign it off, and then I think it was last year, it was, the teacher was more expecting it from us to do it more and things like that, he did encourage it more than this year, because this year it was more like you'd do it and you'll see how you would benefit from it, but then last year it was more like you could do it, you would see how it would benefit and things like that.

FI: Was it not optional last year?

FR2: You were expected to do it. It wasn't like a consequence if you hadn't of done it, it was just for your benefit.

FI: We've been going to speak to other students in other schools as well, and some people said they felt a bit vulnerable sharing their experiences in class, did any of you feel like that?

FR2: I think everyone in our class, everything that was said in our class stayed in the class, no one went out and started talking and saying, "This happened, this happened", we all understood that people can go through different things, and we all understood that there was no reason for us to go out and start telling everyone, so we all kept it in, and we were quite open with everyone in our class.

FI: Was your class like that as well?

FR1: Yes, I think we were happy to say things, and then like you said, nobody actually said anything about it when they went out of the class, it all stayed in.

MR1: People just understood that a lot of this stuff is related to personal life, so if someone says something about their life that is just a bit, it's a bit disrespectful to them if you go and say it to everyone, so that's why everyone just kept it in the class.

FI: It sounds like you've got lovely students in your classes, did you feel at all vulnerable?

MR2: No I didn't feel, because I knew that my class, they could understand, and then I felt more confident after someone else had gone, because you would get, sir would, he would ask them, usually not many people would put their hand up, and then he would start picking people, going, "Do you want to?", and I remember once someone went and everyone else went to do it, because they felt more confident, they could share things with their class.

FI: Another thing we're wondering about is, did you feel you learnt more vocabulary than you were from doing?

All: Yes.

FR1: I think I knew the word, but I didn't fully understand the meaning, but as we went through for two years, I really understand in-depth, what it means.

MR1: Because at the back of the book there's a load of words, and then a load of synonym to them words, so you can just, if it's something about injustice, then if you're writing a story you can just look in the book and you could find a good word that related to that.

FR2: I think that too, because I'm pretty sure one of the tasks we did was writing some of the words and then writing the definition, which helped doing it, so that improved my vocabulary.

FI: Do you think that helped you spot that happening more, with seeing examples of that more?

All: Yes.

FI: Or didn't it make a difference?

FR1: I think, for example, if we were just learning, you might be like, "Oh yeah, I've learnt it", but then as we got the [inaudible 0:21:44] bit, it made us more aware of what we know and what we don't know, and what you need to work on and what you need to understand.

MR2: And also, when we were doing it in class, when we would read the book, to start as well, we'd have to spot how the characters have changed, what vices and virtues they have, and how they've been affected with people and things like that.

FI: Last question, some people have talked about seeing a link between Narnian Virtues and religion, have any of you?

MR1: Yes, because it's like when Aslan dies and then he gets resurrected, it's a bit like the story of Jesus a bit, and he kind of is always helping everyone.

MR2: He puts others before himself, and always looks out for other people.

FI: What did other people think?

FR2: I think that the story represented, and it has got a bit of a religious link, but very vaguely, it's just obviously by itself is like that.

FR1: I think as well, I think it wasn't literally directed at it, it was like she was saying, it was quite vague, but if you thought about it, you would understand what it was.

FI: Really interesting, have you got anything else you want to add? Anything positive or negative that might help us?

MR1: I think if we did it again, the booklet at home probably needs to be, well it's up to the teachers, but I think last year when it was expected, it just makes you think about it more and improves more, so I think it's just the booklet at home could be done more.

FI: Have you got any tips or anything with how it could be changed?

MR2: Maybe just a few less tasks, but maybe do two tasks a week, set out in the booklet.

FI: Has anyone else got anything they'd like to see changed if you did it again?

FR2: Yes, if it was done again then what you were learning, the vices and virtues and stuff, if you done something to do with it, but not exactly the same thing as you've done the same years, something a bit different.

FR1: I also think, linking on to [other's] point, I think if we're going to do it again, maybe make it a little different, so it's kind of more interesting for everyone, and it's not three years doing the same thing, and like [MR2] was saying, I feel like you should maybe do two every week and it's set out in the booklet, so it's not just however many you want to do, it's like, "This is how many this week", and then it tells you and guides you.

MR2: And also, it would be good if there was a quiz in school, we'd learn, say in lesson, a bit more about self-control, and in the booklet at home you'd have a small quiz, and then you'd have to write something about it, and then your teacher could see that you've actually understood what it is.

FI: And something else some people have been saying to us, they would be interested in doing a different novel that wasn't Narnia, but doing the virtues in that, what do you think about that?

FR2: I think that would be interesting.

All: Yes.

MR1: Because it would be more different, and it's not that Narnia repeats itself, but because you've got the same characters and stuff, it does get a little bit boring.

FR2: Repetitive.

All: Yes.

FI: Any suggestions of any books?

No worries if you don't.

Some: No.

FI: Thank you so much for taking part in this, it's been really, really useful.

[CLOSE]