



# BOOKSPARKS

TOGETHER ACROSS DERBY AND NOTTINGHAM



## February 2024 Newsletter

### Welcome to the Spring Term 2 newsletter!

We hope you had an enjoyable half term break! Included in this edition: the latest Booksparks news, upcoming opportunities for primary and secondary, other related news and key dates for your diary.



### What is Booksparks?

As a reminder, Priority Literacy is a Department for Education funded project to support and improve literacy results at KS2 and KS4 in Derby and Nottingham city. Within this wider programme, Booksparks has been devised as the new citywide reading for pleasure strategy planned as part of the overall Priority Literacy offer.

Booksparks aims to boost the profile of reading for pleasure, support raising attainment and engage schools with and signpost to a range of literacy and reading partners, organisations and authors across the cities to support the creation of a real community of reading.

### Primary Book Challenges

We are delighted to have teamed up with Inspire Education Services to offer a range of book challenges for primaries during the Summer Term 2024. These challenges will support fostering a love of reading for pleasure and will excite pupils in a range of ways, including opportunities to meet the shortlisted authors online! More information to follow closer to the time.

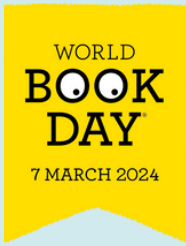


### Secondary Book Challenges

Thank you to all the targeted secondary schools who joined us in January for the launch of Chapter Chasers and Book Alert: two fully resourced book challenges running from February - July 2024, with accompanying book stock funded by DANCOP, for students Y7-Y9. These challenges provide a fantastic opportunity for schools to engage students in a range of book related activities to support reading for pleasure and develop dialogues around reading. We hope the launch of these projects in schools go well!

Not a targeted secondary school? Super news - all secondary schools in Derby and Nottingham city can take part in Chapter Chasers! Participating universal schools can receive all the resources to support the running of this book challenge (except the book stock) and will also be invited to join the live author talks! Resources include: staff guide, posters, bookmarks, reading passport, challenges, activity booklets per book. Universal schools have the flexibility to run the award according to their school's own timeframe. From the Summer Term, universal schools can also take part in Page Pals: a book/reading group initiative to support schools in setting up a book group for Y10 students. Schools can register to participate in these projects [here](#). More information to follow by email.





## World Book Day

Fast approaching on Thursday 7th March 2024, World Book Day is a great way to encourage reading for pleasure in school, but your reading for pleasure promotion should span far wider than just this day!

How might your school celebrate on 7th March - book swap, enjoy cosy reading time, pupils create a 'book in a jar'?

The World Book Day [website](#) has a wealth of activities and suggestions for early years, primary and secondary.



## Priority Literacy - Communities of Practice

As part of Priority Literacy, you may be aware that termly [Communities of Practice](#) events take place for primary and secondary colleagues. These events aim to:

- bring together local practitioners to build a vibrant and purposeful forum to explore effective practice in literacy development
- provide structured and focused opportunities to explore evidence-based research
- engage with a broad range of practitioners supporting literacy, including authors and creatives
- provide a stimulus for participants to make meaningful connections with their own context and literacy priorities

The Summer Term meeting focuses on **developing reading**, led by the National Literacy Trust research team. Depending which event you attend, you will also hear either from the fantastic author Richard O'Neill or A M Dassu. One not to be missed!

**BOOK NOW**



For more information and to book your place at an event, please click below:

[Tuesday 11th June 2024, 2.00pm - 4.00pm, Trent Vineyard, Nottingham Conference Centre](#)

[Monday 15th July 2024, 2.00pm - 4.00pm, Derby Conference Centre](#)



## EmpathyLab: book collection and Empathy Day

EmpathyLab has launched its 2024 Read for Empathy book collection for 3-16-year-olds. Scientific research shows that empathy is learnable and books support to build empathy. The chosen book collection comprises of 65 titles and they have been chosen to inspire young people to learn more about empathy and to put it into action in their every day lives.

Click [here](#) to find out more, download the free guides and register for Empathy Day 2024, taking place on Thursday 6th June 2024.



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## Dates for your diary

Please see below for upcoming opportunities for schools to engage with literacy activities and cultural moments in the school calendar.

27th Jan - 4th Feb

National Storytelling week

1st Feb

World Read Aloud Day

7th Mar

World Book Day

18th - 24th Mar

Shakespeare Week

21st Mar

World Poetry Day

22nd Apr

Earth Day

1st - 31st May

National Share-a-Story Month

6th June

Empathy Day

### Coming your way later in the year...

We are partnering up with Read for Good, who work to enable, empower and inspire a love of reading in children and young people, to organise a city-wide readathon across Derby and Nottingham city for one week in Summer Term 2024. The date for this is being finalised at the moment!



During this week we will be supporting schools, pupils and families to take part in Readathon activities, track reading in school and at home and take part in online author events to promote reading for pleasure.

Watch out for more details in our next newsletter!

### Introduce us to your Reading for Pleasure Lead to find out more!

If you haven't already done so, please click [here](#) to sign up others in your school for Booksparks mailings. For example, it may be that you introduce us to your school's librarian, Literacy Coordinator, Reading Lead, Reading Champion / Reading for Pleasure Champion, etc.



We are looking forward to working with you and your school community!

