



BOOKSPARKS

TOGETHER ACROSS DERBY AND NOTTINGHAM



December Newsletter 2023

Welcome to our first official Booksparks newsletter!

We hope you've had a great term so far! Included in this edition: information about Booksparks - the Reading for Pleasure strand of the Priority Literacy programme, upcoming opportunities for primary and secondary, other related news and key dates for your diary.

What is Booksparks?

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.

Planned activity consists of a range of components to complement the work of the main aspects of Priority Literacy and already existing projects and programmes in the cities.

All schools will be universally offered the opportunity to engage with reading activities across the duration of the project to support in developing their reading for pleasure vision.

Activity you can expect to see during the lifetime of the project includes:

- A menu of active ingredients to support growing your reading culture in school
- Calendar of local and national literature/reading events and activities
- Resources to support teacher/librarian development
- City Readathon
- Development of volunteer reading opportunities
- Links to holiday and summer reading



We have some great targeted book awards and other exciting initiatives involving a select number of schools; we will contact eligible schools directly about these opportunities.

Please introduce us to your Reading for Pleasure Lead to find out more!

Click [here](#) to sign up for 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!



Recent research

The National Literacy Trust's Annual Literacy Survey (September 2023) revealed 56% of children and young people aged 8 – 18 don't enjoy reading in their free time. This is an all-time low statistic since The National Literacy Trust began surveying children in 2005.

We know from research that sparking a love of reading can change a child's life.



Change your story

This survey indicates that children are more likely to read if they have support from role models, access to books that represent them and a quiet space to read in. How can you use this information to ignite and grow a love of reading in your pupils?

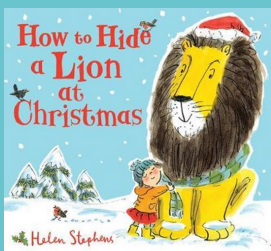
You can register for your school to participate in the 2024 annual survey [here](#). Participating schools will get a personalised school report outlining the findings, which you can compare nationally once the national reports are published.



Christmas book trivia - Did you know...?

In Iceland, books are exchanged on Christmas Eve and families spend the rest of the night reading. People tend to take their books to bed along with some hot chocolate! Books are typically published around the Christmas season, leading to a surge in reading known as Jolabokaflod, which translates roughly to 'Christmas book flood' in English.

Jolabokaflod started during World War II, when paper was one of the few things not rationed in Iceland. Because of this, Icelanders gave books as gifts while other commodities were in short supply. How could you encourage a Jolabokaflod tradition within your school community?



KS1



KS2/3



Further ideas and reading

Check out the links below for you to read and share with your school's reading community:

- Primary: Who do you know who might like to join the free [Blue Peter Book Club](#)? Pupils can also apply for a [Blue Peter Book badge](#)!
- Secondary: A worthwhile [read](#) from Professor Teresa Cremin, discussing how you can use the new Reading Framework to raise the profile of reading for pleasure across your school.
- Take 10 minutes a day to read to benefit from the mood boosting effects reading can provide - videos, resources and more information can be found [here](#).
- Read Sonia Thompson's [blog](#) as she talks about her own reading for pleasure journey and what it means to lead a reading school.
- Poetry By Heart 2024 has launched - for more information and to register, click [here](#)



Introducing Inspire Education Library Service

Do you know about Inspire Education Library Service (ELS)? It is a fantastic school library service that loans books to primary, secondary and special schools. ELS serve schools in Nottingham City, Nottinghamshire, Derby City and Derbyshire.

ELS support schools with their curriculum and teaching of the national curriculum, reading for pleasure and the development of positive reading for pleasure cultures, and school library needs.

Schools who buy in to ELS receive regular deliveries and collections of books, tailored to each school's requirements. Their professional librarians possess specialist knowledge of children's books, the curriculum, school libraries, and children's publishing output and trends, meaning they are well placed to provide expert advice on specific books for the curriculum, reading for pleasure, or a pupil's individual needs.

ELS are part of Inspire: Culture, Learning and Libraries which is a charitable community benefit society delivering cultural and learning services across Nottinghamshire.

Contact ELS

The ELS showroom is open to school staff every week day throughout term time and school holidays. Teachers can visit to choose books, and receive advice and help. Alternatively, schools can use their mail order service using the online project request form found on their website's homepage. Teachers are also welcome to email or telephone ELS to discuss their individual requirements.

Website: <https://www.inspireculture.org.uk/services-schools/els/>

Email: elsg@inspireculture.org.uk

X: Follow @InspireELS



Brilliant Book Award

Brilliant Book Award (BBA)

The Brilliant Book Award is ELS's annual secondary school book award for KS3 pupils which aims to encourage reading for pleasure. The shortlist of six titles is chosen by participating school librarians from recently published quality books that will engage young readers. School buying into ELS can participate in the BBA free of charge and borrow a copy of the shortlisted titles as part of their loan. Pupils read and post book reviews on their dedicated BBA website. Schools also have access to author visits, and pupils vote for the overall winner which is announced in March each year.

The BBA can be purchased by schools as a standalone package from ELS which includes sets of books, author visits and all the online content, as well as promotional material. Click [here](#) for more information or email elsg@inspireculture.org.uk





Winter Mini Challenge

The Winter Mini Reading Challenge runs from 1st December 2023 - 19th February 2024. Aimed at primary aged children, it is similar to the Summer Reading Challenge but a little cosier! The online challenge encourages children to keep reading over the winter holidays. Look at [The Reading Agency's](#) website for more information.

Dates for your diary

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

1st Dec - 19th Feb	Winter Mini Challenge (primary)
27th Jan	Holocaust Memorial Day
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

FYI: coming your way in 2024...

We will be partnering up with [Bookmark Reading Charity](#), who support children's literacy, to bring you some great opportunities.



Who are Bookmark? Working with primary schools, Bookmark support with pupils reading, whole school reading culture and much more. Bookmark offer their partner schools the opportunity to access both online and in-person volunteer led 1:1 reading programmes, reading resources, staff training, grants, as well as a great range of resources called [Your Story Corner](#).

Your Story Corner initiative is coming to Derby...more exciting news in the New Year!



Bookmark

Contact: nicola.gale@sdsa.net

