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New solutions to help every child love reading

Enjoying Reading is an important new initiative to help every child love reading by encouraging schools and libraries to work more closely together.

Enjoying Reading aims to help schools understand how libraries can help them and provide practical tools for joint work. Research shows how central reading for pleasure is for children's life chances, and yet recent international comparisons show that children in England enjoy reading less than their international peers and less than they did five years ago. (Please see [Notes to editors](#) for OECD and PIRLS research references.)

“Children’s enjoyment of reading is critical to their life chances, but schools alone can’t crack this. The Department for Children, Schools and Families believes more joined up working between schools and libraries can make a big difference and is funding the Enjoying Reading initiative to provide inspiration, ideas and practical support. The National Year of Reading is the perfect time to start to strengthen this alliance,” said Jim Knight, Schools Minister.

New resources will be launched on April 1, to coincide with the beginning of the National Year of Reading, to help schools and libraries work together more. These include a website, booklets for schools, and new practical materials linked to the Summer Reading Challenge, a pivotal scheme which schools and libraries can use to join up their work, and keep children reading over the summer holidays.

This is the first time that the crucial contribution that libraries play in supporting children's reading has been recognised through a national online resource for schools. www.enjoyingreading.org.uk shows how schools can make the best of what each part of the library system has to offer. Case studies show how this can work in practice. There is a bank of ideas for getting teachers and library staff working together to achieve common aims, and a discussion space for teachers and library staff to meet virtually and share ideas.

The website has been created in close consultation with teachers, librarians and educational advisers. It builds on the success of existing programmes and should be a catalyst for more joint work.

The time is right: The 2008 National Year of Reading is an important opportunity. Libraries and schools working together can be a powerful force for change. The Enjoying Reading tools show how the partnership can work in practice and will be a major resource for teachers to use during the National Year of Reading and beyond.

Enjoying Reading's new emphasis on partnership working also supports a new drive to give children and young people the chance to take part in cultural activities and develop their creative skills, such as the *Find Your Talent* programme, announced recently by the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) and the Department for Culture, Media and Sport. It also adds another important resource for schools as they develop extended services for children and their parents.

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Enjoying Reading is a partnership project funded by the DCSF and led by The Reading Agency, the independent charity working to get more people reading more.

The other partners are the National Literacy Trust, the School Library Association; the Society of Chief Librarians; the Association of Senior Children's and Education Librarians and the Museums Libraries and Archives Council. Enjoying Reading also involves important education bodies including Ofsted, the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority, and the National Strategies for primary and secondary education.

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Notes to editors

- Research references:
 - Importance of reading for pleasure is for children's life chances: *Reading For Change*, OECD, 2002
 - English children enjoying reading less: Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS): <http://timss.bc.edu>
- For more general information about The Reading Agency and its work, please visit: www.readingagency.org.uk
- The Summer Reading Challenge is run by The Reading Agency and the public library network. It inspires 650,000 children year to read three million books over the summer holidays. Children read up six books of their choice during the holidays, through their local library. They are given incentives to collect as they read, with a medal and certificate for those who complete Challenge. Research shows the Summer Reading Challenge improves their reading range, confidence and enjoyment. For more information, please visit: www.readingagency.org.uk/summer-reading-challenge/
- The 2008 National Year of Reading is a year-long celebration of reading in all its forms. It aims to build a greater national passion for reading . for children, families and adult learners alike. The Year will encourage people to read in businesses, homes and communities around the country, providing new opportunities to read and helping people to access help and support through schools and libraries. To get involved and sign up to Year of Reading activities in your area, log on to: www.yearofreading.org.uk For press enquiries please contact Blue Rubicon PR: yearofreading@bluerubicon.com or call: 020 7260 2700.

It's time to stop reading. It's time to get someone else to start.