



**18 April 2008**

## **SUMMER READING CHALLENGE™: TEN YEARS OLD**

### **New resources for joint work by libraries and schools**

The Reading Agency, the independent charity working to get more reading to more people, is proud that our national Summer Reading Challenge™ is celebrating ten years of working with the UK library network to keep children reading over their summer holidays, with potentially life-changing results.

The Summer Reading Challenge now reaches 650,000 children annually and is run in 97 per cent of the UK's public libraries. It will make a key contribution to the 2008 National Year of Reading. As always, children will be challenged to read six books over the summer, through their local library. They receive a special pack and a set of incentives to collect as they read. Last year, 338,000 children successfully completed the Summer Reading Challenge and received a certificate or medal.

This year's Summer Reading Challenge has a sports theme and is called Team Read. A wide range of resources are available for libraries and an interactive Team Read website ([www.teamread.co.uk](http://www.teamread.co.uk)) will be launched on 16 June, linking children with top authors and illustrators whilst giving them space to talk about their favourite books and share reading ideas. Leading children's publishers have always backed the Summer Reading Challenge, and now support from the RNIB National Library Service means that Large Print materials are available nationally, making the scheme accessible for children with visual impairment.

Enjoying Reading, the partnership project funded by the Department for Children, Schools and Families and led by The Reading Agency is also developing useful resources and models for joint working by libraries and schools, to help increase the future impact of programmes such as the Summer Reading Challenge. This work will help schools to capitalise on the Challenge's summer holiday reading work when children return in the autumn, and support the reading transition made by pupils leaving Year 6 primary schools and newly joining secondary schools.

A new website [www.enjoyingreading.org.uk](http://www.enjoyingreading.org.uk) also supports school and library partnerships. It includes the new library offer for schools plus case studies illustrating practical ways that schools and libraries can work together to develop children as enthusiastic readers.

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**Notes to editors:**

- Founded in 2002, The Reading Agency is an independent charity and reading development agency. It aims to get more reading to more people and is passionate about everyone having an equal chance to become a reader. For more general information, please visit: [www.readingagency.org.uk](http://www.readingagency.org.uk)
- Research shows that when public library and school staff work together, children's reading enjoyment and skills can improve dramatically. Recent national initiatives and government policies have focused on different sectors working together to achieve shared objectives, and Every Child Matters in particular creates a crucial new partnership framework. Libraries have a unique role in this process, because they can link formal and informal learning experiences.
- Importance of reading for pleasure for children's life chances: *Reading for Change*, OECD, 2002. This showed that students who were more enthusiastic about and engaged in reading performed better in tests, and that being a frequent reader was more of an advantage, on its own, than wealth or social status.
- Summer Reading Challenge research: *Inspiring Children: The Impact of the Summer Reading Challenge, 2003 and Summer Reading Challenge 2006: Impact Research* (both available to download from [www.readingagency.org.uk](http://www.readingagency.org.uk)), show how libraries can inspire children's love of reading, widen their reading horizons and build their creativity.

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