Summer Reading Challenge 2008

What a lease of life the Summer Reading Challenge has given to summer activities in Public Libraries since 1999, and what a great lever it has been in getting us into schools and working with partners in both the public and private sectors.

Mike Treacy, Kingston Libraries

My son told me he was going to read his book to me by himself, and spent an HOUR spelling out the whole book. ... He was SO proud of himself that he had read his first 'proper' library book himself. He said he has never won a gold medal and wants to win one!

Parent of Ben, aged 5

Key Achievements

- 690,000 children took part in Team Read – an increase of 6% from the 2007 total
- 290,000 boys took part – 23,500 more than last year (42%, up from 41% in 2007).
- 58% of children completed the full Challenge by reading 6 books over the summer – a significant increase of 6% as the completion rate has been 52% for 2 years.
- 96% of libraries in the UK were involved, through 4,000 libraries.
- 17.6 million children’s materials were borrowed over 10 weeks June to September - 10% more than last year.
- More than 2.8 million books were read by children taking part in the Challenge.
- 47,000 children signed up as new library members.
- The Team Read website had twice as many visitors and visits to the site as the previous year and over 3.4 million page views from June to September.
- 60,000 messages were sent in to the website by children sharing book ideas and getting advice from librarian online ‘coaches’ and top authors.
- 238,600 children attended 13,500 different Team Read events in libraries, linking reading with music, dance, art, writing and poetry performance, as well as sports activities.
- 90% of libraries worked with schools to promote the Challenge and visited 7,000 schools, representing 44% of the schools in their authorities.
- Children and young people played an important volunteer role in over a quarter of libraries delivering the Challenge.
- New resources for primary and secondary schools led to closer working between schools and libraries, using the Challenge to help children enjoy reading and help the transition between Year 6 and 7. (Funded by the Department for Children, Schools and Families as part of the Enjoying Reading programme).
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Executive Summary

The Summer Reading Challenge, coordinated by The Reading Agency, is the biggest children’s reading programme in libraries. Team Read was the tenth annual Summer Reading Challenge, which first ran in UK libraries in 1999. Helped by the profile-raising impact of the National Year of Reading, this was a record-breaking year for the Challenge, in terms of numbers joining and finishing it (reading 6 books), numbers joining the library, and numbers of books borrowed and read. Our report examines the impact of the Challenge and outlines the steps we will take to continue building on its success.

More readers reading more

More children took part in Team Read than in any previous Summer Reading Challenge. A total of 690,000 children participated, a 6% rise from 2007, and 66% of library authorities reported increases on the previous year. The sports theme helped to attract more boys (290,000 compared to 266,300 in 2007). More children completed the Challenge too (58% - compared to 52% in 2006 and 2007). The total number of books read as part of the Challenge was 2.8 million. Children under four could join in via BookStart, with a special Team Read Book Crawl certificate. Children with visual impairment also took part through their local libraries, using Large Print versions of the Team Read materials, supported by the RNIB National Library Service.

We will continue to work with partners to try to make the Challenge accessible to more children with special print needs.

Children feel better about themselves as readers and are more enthusiastic about reading

80% of children say that they are better readers after taking part in the Summer Reading Challenge, and their comments about Team Read showed they had enjoyed the Challenge and felt it had helped their reading. Many parents and carers commented that their children were more enthusiastic about reading as a result of the Challenge.

We aim to follow up existing research with a new study in 2009 looking more closely at the effects of the Challenge on children’s reading levels, and how it can encourage children from disadvantaged groups to visit libraries and enjoy reading for pleasure.

More children borrow more books and join the library

47,000 children joined the library as a result of Team Read, helping the NYR aims of increasing library membership. This was an increase of 9,000 over the previous year. Libraries reported an increase of 10% in their issue figures for children’s materials during the summer months – going from 16.8 million items in 2007 to 17.6 million in 2008. The Challenge is an ideal initiative for engaging with families through partnerships with schools, and family learning organisations.

We will build on case studies and emerging partnerships to use the Challenge in our plans to develop more support for family literacy.

Children and families engage in wider cultural experiences

Library services ran a wide range of extra activities as part of Team Read, with a total of 238,600 children going to 13,500 different events. These were often highly creative, involving all the family and linking reading activities with music, dance and art. Many children’s authors and illustrators supported the Challenge, appearing at workshops, prize givings and other events.

The Challenge can be a key focus for cultural experiences during the summer months and we will build on existing projects to support libraries’ role in rolling out the ‘cultural offer.’

More young people are involved in volunteering

Children and young people played an important volunteer role in over a quarter of libraries delivering the Challenge, some using their experience for accreditation. The Challenge is a really effective way for libraries to involve young people, supporting the Youth Offer.

We will build resources and case studies to help this work develop.

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1 In England and Wales
The unique library offer

The wide range of activities and events linked to Team Read illustrated the unique role that libraries play in offering children and families a complete reading experience, combining reading with talking about books, community engagement and wider cultural experiences. The Team Read website offered a fantastic interactive online reading experience, combining high quality games and reading activities. The website had twice as many visits and visitors as the previous year, and three times as many page views. It gave children a chance to interact with authors and illustrators through featured blogs. Library staff featured as online ‘coaches’, answering questions about best books to read. Children responded by sending in 60,000 messages and comments during the summer months.

We will offer training to help libraries use the Summer Reading Challenge to demonstrate how libraries support local authority priorities relating to children.

Contributing to local priorities

The Challenge supports key national and local agendas. In England especially the Every Child Matters outcomes Enjoying and Achieving and Making a Positive Contribution. The Team Read sports theme meant that it also contributed to Being Healthy. 17% of English authorities have successfully used the Challenge as part of the local authorities’ LAA target setting and delivery plan. It provides a tangible model for joining up support for children’s reading across the authority. We will reflect this opportunity in our new training to help libraries support National Indicators and LAA priorities and targets.

Developing partnerships with schools

More library services actively connected with schools to promote the Summer Reading Challenge. 90% of library services visited schools, targeting 7,000 schools (44% of the schools in their authorities). There is evidence that this targeted promotion has led to increases in numbers taking part and children completing the Challenge.

More Resources for Primary Schools

The Enjoying Reading programme funded by DCSF subsidised new resources to support these links with schools. It has shown the benefits of providing support and resources to help libraries engage with schools.

We will develop resources to encourage primary schools to promote the Challenge and to follow up on it in the autumn term.

Resources for transition age and beyond

This year we experimented further using the Challenge to develop links between public libraries and secondary schools and their feeder primary schools, to support transition children. We produced materials that worked to extend the appeal of the Challenge to the older 11+ age group, which secondary schools could pick up on in the autumn term.

We will create a new transition resource to encourage older children to continue reading independently and using the library as they move to secondary school. We will also consider developing the offer further, for pupils in Years 7 and 8.

Opportunities with Extended Schools Services

As extended services increase, there is real potential for libraries to work with them to provide creative reading activities, using the Challenge, during the summer.

We will continue to promote the use of the Challenge in extended schools, designing the materials to help libraries develop and define their local offer to the extended schools service.

Looking Ahead

The Summer Reading Challenge is now a well-established reading programme that inspires huge numbers of children to read more. It is an engine for change in the sector and helps libraries show their contribution to a range of local and national agendas.

A new Strategy Group with members from ASCEL and SCL will be meeting regularly during 2009 to work with us on scoping development areas over the next 3-5 years.
Introduction

Team Read was the tenth annual Summer Reading Challenge coordinated by The Reading Agency and run in UK libraries. The sporting theme picked up on the excitement of the Beijing Olympics, and tied in with the August theme for the National Year of Reading, which was ‘Read the Game – building links between sports and reading’. Libraries were able to work with new and existing sports club and leisure centre partners to create a buzz around reading and sports activities; offering healthy and creative things to do in the summer.

Team Read and the National Year of Reading

The Summer Reading Challenge is a major part of libraries’ offer to children and families, run by virtually all library authorities, and it was a key focus of their activities during the National Year of Reading (NYR). NYR target audiences were carefully considered as part of the SRC planning process for reaching all children and successfully involving them in the Challenge. The News of the World ran a special feature on NYR on Sunday 3rd August featuring the Summer Reading Challenge. This was the first time there had been coverage of the Challenge in a tabloid newspaper, which was chosen to match the demographics of families targeted by NYR. The feature may well have helped to raise awareness of the Challenge.

The Challenge

Team Read challenged children to read six library books of their choosing over the summer holidays. They were given a membership card when they joined, with a foldout ‘stadium’ poster on which to log their books. They collected bronze, silver and gold stickers to record their progress, with various incentives to encourage them on the way. Certificates and gold medals were awarded to children completing the Challenge.

The Website

The Team Read website provided an online experience that complemented the Challenge. Children could create their own on-screen character to explore the site, and join teams with other characters. They could play reading-related sports games, read blogs from top children’s authors, log their favourite books (receiving virtual bronze, silver and gold medals for every two books read), and send in messages and jokes to share with other children taking part. A link with Stories from the Web led to further Team Read activities and a chance to browse and send in book reviews.

Large Print materials

RNIB National Library Services supported the creation of large print versions of the Team Read materials so that children with visual impairment were able to take part.

Bookstart Book Crawl

Younger children under four could take part in their own version of the Challenge with Bookstart Book Crawl certificates designed to complement the Team Read materials and provided free of change by Bookstart as part of their Book Crawl programme.

Team Read Overseas

The British Council uses the Challenge to promote reading for pleasure in 23 different countries through 41 British Council offices. See Appendix 6 for British Council Interim Report on Team Read.

New Resources for Schools

Through the Enjoying Reading programme, funded by the Department for Children, Schools and Families, we created new resources for libraries to use with schools, to encourage closer working between public libraries and schools. Resources were complemented by case studies and ideas for teachers on the Enjoying Reading website www.enjoyingreading.org.uk.

For primary schools these resources included:

- A Team Read wall chart for schools to display, to promote the Challenge
- Lesson plans and a large size poster for following up the Challenge in the autumn term
For secondary schools we created a way of encouraging Year 6s to take part in the Summer Reading Challenge and to take forward their reading experience as they enter their new secondary schools in the autumn. The materials and resources consisted of:

- Extreme Team Read membership cards
- Exclusive section of Team Read website
- Lesson plans with ideas on using Extreme Team Read with Year 7 students, to introduce them to the library at their new schools.

Pilot schools tested out the resources in Bristol, Dorset, London Borough of Brent, London Borough of Redbridge, Gloucestershire and Stockport.¹

**National Recognition from MPs.**

The Summer Reading Challenge was celebrated in Parliament as an example of libraries’ success in promoting reading for pleasure. Lyn Brown, Chair of the All Party Parliamentary Group on Libraries and Information Management, invited MPs to attend a Team Read summer reception at the House of Commons. Eighty MPs came to the event, including Jim Knight, Secretary of State for Children, Schools and Families and Margaret Hodge, Minister of State for Culture, Media & Sport.

³ See [www.enjoyingreading.org.uk](http://www.enjoyingreading.org.uk) for examples of Primary and Transition lesson plans and ideas.
Aims of the 2008 Challenge

The Summer Reading Challenge aims to reach all children with a holiday offer that will enthuse and encourage their reading, building their confidence and creativity through shared activity and inspiring reading experiences.

Through the 2008 Summer Reading Challenge, we aimed to achieve these outcomes:

- More children reading more, including more boys and more children with visual impairment (National Year of Reading target audiences)
- Children feel better about themselves as readers and are more enthusiastic about reading
- More children borrow more books and join the library
- Children and families engage in wider cultural experiences
- More young people are involved in volunteering work at their local library.

We also aim to show how libraries can use the Challenge to

- promote the unique library offer - combining reading with talking about books, community engagement and wider cultural experiences
- raise their profile within local authorities, showing how their work supports national indicators, local priorities and Local Area Agreement targets
- develop stronger and closer partnerships with schools.

Evaluation Methodology

The main findings in this report are based on the following data sources:

**Library evaluation survey:** An evaluation form was issued in advance to all participating library authorities, and then made available online from August to November. 176 authorities completed our online questionnaire – 88% of participating authorities. These results provided data on take-up of the Challenge, numbers of books read, and numbers completing, plus feedback on how local library authorities implement the Challenge, so we can monitor any significant changes.

**Library authority reports:** Some library authorities also sent in their own reports; comments from parents and children, and/or photos from events. These included: Edinburgh, Essex, Leicestershire, North Tyneside, Staffordshire, West Berkshire and Wiltshire.

**Website report:** For the website report, in addition to the data from the evaluation form, we used web trends reports, plus a report submitted by Stories from the Web. (Full report attached; see Appendix 3)
Evaluation Findings: Team Read Outcomes for Children and Families

More readers reading more

A total of 690,000 children took part in the Summer Reading Challenge this year, the greatest number since it started ten years ago. Two-thirds of library authorities reported increases on the previous year. More boys took part than last year (290,000 compared to 266,500), accounting for 42% of participants, up from 41% the previous year. (Boys were a key target audience of this year’s National Year of Reading).

A higher percentage of children completed the Challenge, too. At 400,200 this represented 58% of children taking part, which is a significant achievement, and many library authorities reported completion rates of 70% and above (see Appendix – charts).

More children and a higher completion rate meant that more books than ever before were read during the Challenge. A total of 2.8 million books were read as part of the Challenge – not counting all the extra reading from children who read more than six books over the summer. This compares to 2.5 million books in 2007.

“Team Read has helped me to read loads of books”
Saad, aged 8, Harlesden

141,500 people visited the Summer Reading Challenge website, twice as many as the previous year, with twice as many visits at 227,300. This led to a total of 3.4 million page views – up from 1 million last year. 55,500 children sent in messages to the site and 30,000 earned ‘virtual’ gold medals by logging their 6 books read for the Challenge.

“I’m so close to gold! I just love reading! Thanks Team Read!”
Aurelja, age 11, Derby

“I am so excited to be in Team Read and be in a team.”
Wazeer, 9, Tottenham

Children feel better about themselves as readers and are more enthusiastic about reading

We know from research in 2003 and 2006 that children who take part in the Challenge are more confident about their reading and enjoy taking part. They are also more likely to take part again each year. In the 2006 Impact Research Study, 69% of the children who had taken part in 2005 took part again in 2006, and 96% of the overall sample said they wanted to do the Challenge again next year.

Children’s comments about Team Read showed that they enjoyed taking part and felt it had helped them with their reading.

“It was the best summer read ever. It helped me practice my reading.”
Jordan, age 10 (boy), Wiltshire

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“I thought the Team Read was very fun and exciting. I have been doing the reading challenges for a long time every summer, I have enjoyed it every year. I am looking forward to the next reading challenge next summer.”

Rebecca, age 8, Lancashire

Parents noticed that the Challenge had helped their children’s reading skills by encouraging them to read through the summer holidays:

“Thomas really enjoyed the Team Read. It helped throughout the holidays with bringing on his reading skills and especially helped him for his return to school. He went up a stage in reading”

Parent of 6 year old, Wiltshire

Children leaving messages on the Team Read website message board were enthusiastic about the website and the experience of joining in with Team Read at their library. Two thirds of the messages sent to the website were about how much they enjoyed taking part in the Challenge and reading during the summer.

“Me and some of my other friends have joined the Team Read and it is so cool! We spent over 5 HOURS in the library yesterday”

Alanna aged 10, Scotland

More children borrow more books and join the library

From data reported by participating library authorities, loans of children’s materials were up by 10% during the 10 week summer period, compared to last year. The extrapolated total comes to 17.6 million children’s materials being issued, compared to 16.8 million in 2007.

47,000 children joined the library in order to take part in Team Read. This represents 7% of the number of participants. Last year’s figures showed that 38,000 children became new library members to take part in the Challenge, representing 6% of participants.

During the National Year of Reading over 2.2 million people joined their local library. The extra efforts of libraries in promoting the NYR and Team Read may have had a parallel effect in increasing numbers. For example, in July the North East region reported a 6% increase in numbers joining the library, and a 13% increase in numbers of children signing up for the Summer Reading Challenge; similarly in the London region there was a 10% increase in numbers joining the library and a 10% increase in Challenge participants.

The Summer Reading Challenge also encouraged more parents to visit the library more often, and this is important in building up support for literacy within the family.

“Team Read was fab. It also got me back into using the library – something I haven’t done regularly for years.”

Parent of children aged 5 and 7 years, Edinburgh

Libraries used imaginative ways to draw attention to the Challenge. In Doncaster a partnership with Doncaster Rovers Football Club meant that the team mascot could be used to promote the Challenge in a busy shopping centre and encourage new library membership:
“Our [Doncaster Rovers] Donny Dog promotion worked very well - we made large formats of the membership card and made Donny a member of the library and Team Read… The children loved it!”

Doncaster Libraries

Children and families engage in wider cultural experiences

The Summer Reading Challenge is used by library services as a focus for a vast number of family and children’s events to promote libraries and reading to young people and their families. They link reading activities with music, dance, and art, as well as introducing people to children’s authors and illustrators. This is turn, helps to broaden the library cultural offer to children.

As a part of Team Read, 238,600 children attended 13,500 different events in libraries, and at other venues organised by libraries. In 2007 there were 11,257 events involving 292,504 children.

41% of the activities were provided through libraries working with partner organisations and arts practitioners, such as:

- Circus skills workshops
- Comic book illustration workshops
- Poetry workshops and storytelling
- Mini Olympics
- Dancing (including Bhangra, Bollywood and Street Dancing)
- Football and sports quizzes (e.g. new author Tom Palmer ran 73 football events in 29 authorities over 38 days).
- Author and illustrator events (such as Ian Whybrow, Cliff McNish, Steve Smallman)

59% of events are run by library staff, using the Challenge sports theme to create innovative ways of sharing books, choosing books and learning about new things. In Surrey, workshops run by Funsense Theatre encouraged children to learn about China and its culture as they helped create a visually stunning display of a Chinese landscape and life-size Chinese dragon.

Some events were large scale; for example, launch events in theatres (1,000 people attended an event with the poets Paul Cookson and David Harmer at the Victoria Theatre, Halifax) or at football stadiums (a joint launch event by Leicester City and Leicestershire County Libraries was held at Leicester City ground). And many were celebratory, rewarding children who have achieved a lot through their participation in the Challenge:
“We had a big celebration event at the Newcastle United Football ground with children who local libraries were asked to nominate – children who’d made a special effort in Team Read over the summer. We gave three of the children bronze silver and gold awards, and we played the National Anthem – they were so proud!”

Newcastle Libraries

Through a new partnership between The Reading Agency and Nintendo, we were able to arrange for five city locations to offer Nintendo WII Fit family events at city centre libraries. Birmingham Libraries commented that this event was particularly good for reaching non-members.

Team Read events encouraged children to get to know each other, and families to join in with their local community, and libraries often reported a family learning outcome.

“We ran a K'nex Family Challenge - a series of 'heats' ran in libraries for families to design and race a car made from K'nex pieces. A grand finale for the fastest/most successful entries was held at Central Library. Successful, cumulative family learning that was noticeable for the higher level of boys and men that participated.”

Leicestershire Libraries

Sports activities such as mini Olympics were popular, and helped to forge partnerships with local leisure departments. Sports stars were invited to award medals at ceremony events, acknowledging children’s own achievements and making a link with mainstream sports/leisure activities, for example Kyran Bracken (rugby), Joe Perry (snooker), and returning Olympic and Paralympic Medal winners. Football activities were successful in bringing in boys and their dads to the library, and encouraged them to join the Challenge.

More young people participate in volunteering

Thirty-two library authorities involved secondary school students as volunteers for the Summer Reading Challenge, compared to twenty-eight in 2007. Young volunteers helped staff to administer the Challenge and set up events in the library. They spent time with younger children, helping them with activities and listening to them talking about the books they’d been reading. Volunteers were recruited through ‘V’ (previously Millennium Volunteers, for 16-25 year old young people), Trident Trust (14-15 year old students), Duke of Edinburgh Award, CSV (community service volunteers) and other volunteer organisations.

“I have enjoyed volunteering and involving the children in the library and the activities it put on.”

Trident volunteer, Essex

“I very much enjoyed my time with Team Read. I would recommend it to anyone who enjoys working with children and who loves to read. I learned new skills and had fun whilst working.”

Trident volunteer, Essex
With projects such as Trident, the volunteering time counts towards an accreditation for young people. We will be developing this element of the Challenge in future to support libraries to offer accredited and non-accredited volunteering opportunities.

There were other volunteers, including parents, retired people, school leavers and students, who offered help and support for Team Read.

“Volunteers were a fantastic help to staff preparing packs for each visit. They enjoyed working with younger children and liked the responsibility of helping at events. We couldn’t have managed without them.”

Bournemouth Libraries

Volunteers from Haverstock School were awarded certificates by the Mayor of the London Borough of Camden at the end of the summer.

Libraries’ unique contribution

The unique library offer

The wide range of activities and events generated through Team Read illustrated the unique role that libraries play in offering children and families a complete reading experience, combining reading with talking about books, community engagement and wider cultural experiences.

In particular, Team Read’s sports/Olympic theme meant that libraries could build on partnerships with local sports organisations and professional teams such as football clubs, to add an extra dimension to Summer Reading Challenge activities, which was especially useful in reaching boys.

“We promoted the challenge with a Playing for Success group, with enthusiastic backing from tutors; [we had] feedback, received from some of the children, that they had all completed.”

Somerset Libraries

The Team Read website offered a fantastic interactive online reading experience, combining high quality games and reading activities. The website included a chance to interact with ten authors and illustrators, through featured blogs. Library staff also featured as online ‘coaches’ answering questions from children about the best books to read next. There were 5,000 responses to these blogs and questions to the coaches.
In some library authorities, Chatterbooks reading groups were promoted through schools as a way of continuing the momentum gained via the Challenge, and keeping up the support for children’s reading enjoyment. In Hertfordshire, for example, children who are members were invited to talk about Chatterbooks in the autumn term, to generate new members amongst those who had enjoyed going to the library during the Summer Reading Challenge.

**Contribution to Local Priorities**

**Every Child Matters outcomes**

The Summer Reading Challenge supports key national and local agendas and in England especially the Every Child Matters outcomes, particularly Enjoying and Achieving, and Making a positive contribution. This summer’s sports theme meant that it also contributed to Being healthy.

**1. Enjoy and Achieve**

Libraries use the national Impact Research to illustrate the impact of the Summer Reading Challenge on children. They also use their own evaluation to show local impact. Hertfordshire Libraries analyzed their ‘Tell us what you think’ comments from children against the Generic Learning Outcomes, and Staffordshire Libraries used the results from interviews with 231 children.

“65% said that they thought they were better readers at the end of the Challenge than at the start and this seems quite a low number, but many children classed themselves as ‘good’ readers already. 73% said that they enjoyed reading and 84% enjoyed Team Read. The Challenge is therefore supporting the outcomes of Every Child Matters by helping young people to enjoy and achieve.”

Staffordshire Libraries

**2. Making a positive contribution**

At a national level, children help in the design and development of the Summer Reading Challenge. We asked children from Chatterbooks groups in Hertfordshire, Haringey and Hull to help in the selection of books for the Challenge collections. We also consulted focus groups of children in the choice of illustrator for the Team Read materials.

At a local level children contribute as library volunteers, helping with preparation, administration and support for other children taking part, sometimes even acting as individual mentors. In Rochdale, children were selected to act as Ambassadors for the Summer Reading Challenge. The Ambassadors came to a Fun Football Day to learn all about Team Read, and then returned to advocate for the Challenge with their peers. This was effective not only in spreading the message in an accessible way for the children, but also in raising the confidence of the Ambassadors themselves.

“One outcome was increase in confidence of the ambassadors chosen. I met many of them in our libraries over the summer as they came to join Team Read

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5 See Appendix 5 for the full table showing the policy context.
6 Summer Reading Challenge Impact Research Report, Product Perceptions 2007
themselves and all I spoke to had been really pleased to be selected.”

Rochdale Libraries

The Challenge can lead to further participation in library activities, for example a boy in Staffordshire has gone on to lead a successful reading group in the library following on from Team Read.

3. Being Healthy

Some libraries used the theme of Team Read to support the Being Healthy outcome, highlighting stock about healthy diet and exercise, and running events to encourage fitness such as Mini-Olympics, often working with sports and leisure partners.

“As this year’s theme was sport/Olympics we were able to tie this in to Leeds objective with staying healthy and childhood obesity. We had activities which were sport based… also for our celebration party children were given a free swim voucher for their local leisure centre. These activities all had book themed activities and ranged from Circus skills workshops, sports day events, mini Olympics and routines for cheerleading.”

Leeds Libraries

“The particular theme of this year’s SRC meant that we tied in especially with sport and healthy living. We formed a partnership with DC Leisure, the company that run the local swimming pool/sports complex... They gave us free swim and play vouchers for children who read 4 books.”

Kingston-upon-Thames Libraries

Other priority agendas

1. Reaching Disadvantaged Groups

Partnership working was a key element of the National Year of Reading, which enabled services to more easily understand and reach specific target audiences, including Looked After children and those with a print impairment.

67 library authorities positively promoted the Challenge to Looked After Children, and in some cases the level of provision went deeper, with specific SRC activities and support being provided.

“We also had a specific SRC event for looked after children; they could join the SRC and take part in sports themed activities.”

Leeds Libraries

In Leicestershire the library service involved a group of traveller children in the Challenge, working with partners at a school and in the local authority to ensure this happened:
“The targeted work in the school where there are traveller children increased take up, and several traveller children came to join. One mother also joined. There is an improved relationship with the head and also the perception of traveller children by some library staff has now improved.”

Leicestershire Libraries

Library authorities promoted the Challenge to families, special schools and teachers of children with visual impairment. In eleven different library authorities, around thirty children with visual impairment took part in Team Read, using the new Large Print versions of the materials supported by RNIB National Library Service. This was the first time that they could take part through their local library, rather than as a separate challenge through RNIB, and the new approach was welcomed.

"I was really thrilled to receive a medal and large print certificate at the end of Summer Reading Challenge in the same way as all the children who took part at my local library."

Giant print reader, aged 9

The large print materials were also offered to children with additional needs, through special schools.

See Appendix 3 for a full table of library partnerships illustrating the groups they worked with to promote the Summer Reading Challenge.

2. Volunteering

One of the aims of the National Year of Reading was to get more people involved in volunteering in reading activities. The number of libraries working with local volunteers to help deliver Team Read increased by 1% to 28% in 2008 (42 library authorities). Libraries are building on their experiences and working with more volunteers in more libraries; for example in Suffolk they used 43 students and 131 adults in 28 out of 44 libraries in 2007, and in 2008 this had increased to 56 students and 186 adults in 38 libraries. The help of volunteers enables libraries to provide a greater level of support for children taking part in the Challenge. In addition it involves more people from the community in supporting children’s reading enjoyment through the safe, welcoming environment of the library. Secondary school pupils can gain accreditation through their volunteer work on the Challenge, and it contributes to the range of Positive Activities on offer, an important agenda for local authorities’ support for young people. This helps authorities to address the local authority National Indicator for participation in volunteering (NI 6).

“Young volunteers were felt on the whole to provide a win-win situation enabling extra activities for libraries, additional help with children and children reportedly benefiting from interaction with talking to individuals closer to their own age. Young People were noted to have developed in self-esteem and confidence and a package was drawn up to develop new and transferable skills.”

Lancashire Libraries
“Extremely rewarding for all concerned... All volunteers who completed the programme want to volunteer again next year and some are interested in additional volunteering opportunities in libraries. We’re working with the Youth Service to develop a specific SRC volunteer award for the future and also considering other accreditation possibilities.”

Tameside Libraries

3. Well-being – children and families

Parents commented that taking their children to join in with the Summer Reading Challenge had reawakened their awareness and enjoyment of library visits. Essex Libraries carried out a study on *The impact of the Summer Reading Challenge on the well-being of children and their families*. This uses the Generic Social Outcomes to analyse the responses of children and families to their experience of taking part in the Challenge.7

“The strongest area of evidence in the research is the role the Summer Reading Challenge plays in giving families an opportunity to share in an activity together. The activity engages adults as well as children and motivates adults to support children. Parental support and encouragement really make a difference to children’s enjoyment of the Challenge and children value parents being involved.”

Sarah Mears, Essex Libraries

“Tom has loved getting his medals just like the athletes at the Olympics and it has increased our reading time as a family as we put time aside each evening to do it. The librarians have been very enthusiastic about it too encouraging the children.”

Parent of 5 year old, Essex

The Essex study found that parents and carers enjoyed the experience of visiting the library during the summer, and that taking part in the Challenge encourages reading together and talking about books amongst children, friends and family.

4. Local Area Agreements and other local plans

The Summer Reading Challenge is a key focus for joint work between schools, libraries and children’s centres, and is cited in local plans for achieving local priorities.

“It is used as examples of good practice, and highlighted as ways to support local priorities in the Enjoying and Achieving sub group of the Children’s Plan.”

Telford Libraries

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92% of library authorities that took part in Team Read have the Summer Reading Challenge in their library service’s overall action/delivery plan. 30% of authorities also have the SRC mentioned in the local authority’s Children’s and Young People’s service plan, and 17% in their Local Area Agreements.

**Case Study**

In Hertfordshire, the Summer Reading Challenge was included in the LAAs when the libraries’ directorate was merged with education and social care into a children’s and young people’s strategic partnership. Each of the portfolios was asked to identify areas where they are working across all the partnerships within the districts (such as district children’s trusts, schools and commercial partnerships) and suggest targets. The SRC was a clear and tangible example of a programme which touches on all the partnerships.

The identified outcome is: **Children and young people have fun and enjoyable things to do and good places to go to that support their personal and emotional development**

**And the target is:**
Increase the numbers of children who complete the Summer Reading Challenge (SRC) from 7080 to 7750 by 2009

This target was set across 3 years, and Hertfordshire Libraries exceeded the target in the first year.

Another target was a stretch target, which was to involve more children who are looked after, and they have also met that target.

Having the Summer Reading Challenge included in the LAAs has raised the profile of libraries and helped to build relationships with other key partners.

Through working together on Team Read, libraries created new partnerships with sports departments, and it has helped them to start planning their contribution to the Cultural Olympiad:

“The SRC helps us to meet our core objectives of ‘helping people to share and enjoy books’, ‘meeting people and joining in events and activities’ and ‘promoting the enjoyment of reading’.
It has supported our commitment to Kent's Cultural Olympiad for the 2012 Olympics, and has strengthened partnership work with the Sports development Unit.”

*Kent Libraries*

“Partnerships with Sports and Leisure Departments have been mutually beneficial. Publicising through Schools and Children’s Centres have increased library service profile with Children's Services Directorate”.

*North Somerset*
**Developing partnerships with schools**

90% of libraries visited 7,000 schools, representing an average of 44% of the total schools in their authorities, to encourage the children to take part in the Challenge. This compares to 80% of libraries last year, and means they have visited an extra 1,000 schools.

Over half of the authorities taking part (51%) targeted specific schools for intensive promotion of the Challenge and of those 69% reported an overall increase in numbers taking part (62% last year), 75% reported an increase in numbers completing the Challenge (53% last year), and 82% reported that it has led to a closer working relationship with the head teacher/teachers (unchanged). At one library in Staffordshire, for example, targeted work with a local school led to a 54% increase in the number of children taking part, and a 42% increase in the number of children completing.

It is apparent that the work with schools is becoming more targeted each year, and libraries are taking a thoughtful approach, to build stronger relationships.

“One of our biggest challenges has been to gain the recognition and support of the education authorities and hence the schools. It has been very difficult to get much interest, but for the last couple of years, I have sent my report - which highlights the benefits of the SRC to children - to the Director and this year, with a change of Directors, we seem to finally be starting to create links. Hopefully this will move us towards the SRC being included in their strategic plan.”

Slough Libraries

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**Case Study**

Cornwall Libraries ran a targeted project with Out of Hours Learning, working intensively with schools in disadvantaged areas to encourage families to take part in the Challenge. The five identified schools were in rural areas, where it is difficult to engage families with the library.

The Out of Hours Learning Coordinator, working with the Young People’s Library Officer, set up launch events in the schools, and in local leisure centres, involving sports activities and poetry and writing workshops, introductory talks about Team Read and a free set of information and incentives.

In all five schools this approach led to significant increases in numbers of children taking part and completing the Challenge. In one school, only one child had taken part in the Challenge in 2007, but in 2008 17 children took part in Team Read, and 15 of them completed the Challenge. In another school where 2 children took part in 2007, 18 took part in 2008, and 16 of them completed.8 An important outcome for the libraries was that new children were being taken to the local library by their families. Their challenge is to build on the positive experience and keep the children and their families visiting the library and enjoying reading.

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8 See Case Study on Enjoying Reading website [www.enjoyingreading.org.uk](http://www.enjoyingreading.org.uk)
New Primary School Resources

As part of the Enjoying Reading programmes, funded by the Department for Children, Schools and Families, libraries received 14,700 staffroom wall posters for Team Read to use with schools.

“Staff found this resource helpful when working with schools. They are always looking for new ideas to work with schools.”

Staffordshire

The follow up ‘Goalie’ wall poster for use in classrooms was used to maintain the library’s relationship with schools and to get children talking about the books they’d read during the summer holidays. As this was a pilot year, it was sent out in a targeted way where libraries have a particularly good partnership with schools. Lesson plans suggested by CLPE were welcomed, but libraries found they had little time to promote them to schools before the end of the summer term, and have commented that they needed them earlier in order to promote them as part of their pre-summer visits.

The pilot primary schools who had been sent the new resources found the A4 version of the wall display was a useful resource to give out to parents, and used the follow-up classroom charts in different ways: At one school, they created medal displays to generate a sense of competition between classes. At another school, the charts were used purely to decorate the library, and the follow-up activity was the creation of a new Team Read reading group, involving Year 6s mentoring Year 3 reluctant readers.

Transition Resources

57% of participating library authorities bought the Extreme Team Read cards, which were offered at a price subsidised by the DCSF grant. Some reported that it was a popular incentive with the older age group taking part in the Challenge, and that they would like to use the approach again next year.

“The extreme team read cards were popular. We asked the children to read a further 4 books and write 2 book reviews to complete extreme team read and if they completed they were given a book token. For the older children this was very popular. The children all seemed to enjoy the games on the web site. We would definitely consider extreme team read next year.”

Children who accessed The Extreme Team Read section of the Team Read website enjoyed the resource:

“I love Team Read’s Extreme Team Games”

Tandeka, Norwich

But many visitors to the website found the Extreme Team Read access difficult. Some authorities also found that it was confusing for staff to administer an extra resource for a particular age group.

School library managers at the pilot schools reported that the cards looked attractive and worked well for promoting the Challenge to transition pupils, which they did at parents’ evenings and at induction sessions before the end of the summer term. However, the pressures on their time at the beginning of the autumn term meant that they found it hard to plan in many of the ideas for using the Team Read materials.
Extended Schools Services

Six library authorities reported that they had funding from extended schools to help provide activities and materials to involve children in the Summer Reading Challenge during the summer, including one authority (Tameside) where Extended Schools funded all the SRC materials for the libraries and enough to ensure all of Year 6 could take part.

In Leicester City the Extended Schools Services asked the library service to run a programme of activities based on the Summer Reading Challenge during the summer holidays. The materials and activities created for Year 6-7 transition pupils formed a key part of their service.

“We bought Extreme Team read cards as part of the promotions we bought for Year 6 – they were very excited about them. We also gave them out to the summer play schemes that were running in conjunction with children’s centres ... They ran Team Read activities in the summer holidays and that included the card, and going on the computers in the play schemes.”

Leicester City
Conclusions
The Team Read theme tapped into people’s interest in the Olympics, and made a link between library services and leisure services that helped build stronger partnerships. It also had an appeal to boys through sports, which helped increase the proportion of boys taking part. The National Year of Reading helped libraries to work with existing and new partners to reach targeted groups of children.

Key achievements were:

- **Significantly more children taking part and reading more**
- **Significantly more boys taking part**
- **Significantly more children completing the Challenge**
- **Significantly more children’s materials were borrowed from libraries and significantly more books were read**
- **A 100% increase in visits to the Team Read website and a three fold increase in page views**
- **Children sent in a total of 55,500 messages to the website and interacted online with librarian ‘coaches’ and top authors**
- **A significant increase in the number of library events.**
- **New resources for schools paved the way for closer working between schools and libraries, using the Challenge to encourage children’s reading enjoyment and help the transition between Year 6 and 7. Libraries worked with more schools than ever before.**
- **More children and young people were involved as volunteers than in previous years.**

Looking ahead
After ten successful years, the Summer Reading Challenge has become established as the major national library promotion for children’s reading in the UK. The next ten years could see it extend to reach even more children and their families.

As schools continue to review how they teach and encourage children’s reading enjoyment, the Summer Reading Challenge is an ideal support. It keeps children reading over the summer, and encourages and motivates them by providing free access to a wide range of inspiring reading. Children are supported through the Challenge by a range of incentives and chance to earn a certificate or medal. And they are supported on the way by friendly and helpful library staff and volunteers, working with the children, their parents and their wider families. The Summer Reading Challenge is a key resource in improving attitudes to reading, supporting the government’s drive to raise children’s achievement and narrow the gap for the most disadvantaged children.

Raising achievement and narrowing the gap: Partnerships with Schools
This year libraries worked even more closely with schools, visiting more schools, sending out more information and targeting particular schools to increase participation in the Summer Reading Challenge. There is evidence that this led to greater take up and completion rates, and a growing recognition from head teachers and literacy coordinators that the Challenge has a positive impact on children’s attitude to reading. The Enjoying Reading programme funded by DCSF subsidised new resources to support these links with schools. It has shown the benefits of providing support and resources to help libraries engage with schools. As a result we will work further on resources to encourage primary schools to promote the Challenge and to follow up on it in the autumn term. We also aim to commission new impact research for summer 2009, to look more closely at the effects of the Reading Challenge on children’s reading levels, and how the Challenge can help children from disadvantaged groups to access libraries and read for pleasure more.
Transition age and beyond

This year we experimented further using the SRC to develop and maintain links between public libraries and secondary schools and their feeder primary schools, to support transition children. Our aim was to keep a continuum of support for children’s reading right through the transition period from July to September. We produced materials that were successful in extending the appeal of the Challenge to the older 11+ age group. There is now a need to refine and further develop the transition offer, as well as to consider the needs of pupils in Years 7 and 8. We want to build on the current model to encourage older children to continue reading independently and using the library as they move into their teenage years.

Extended schools

As extended services increase, there is considerable potential for libraries to work with them to provide creative reading activities, using the SRC, during the summer. We will continue to promote the use of the SRC in extended schools, designing SRC order forms and materials to assist libraries to develop and define their local offer to extended schools.

Children’s Cultural Experiences

It is widely acknowledged that children need to have good access to high quality cultural experiences. The ten Find Your Talent pathfinder projects are currently piloting approaches to offering every child the chance of 5 hours cultural experience per week, including literature and reading. The SRC is an ideal platform for such a cultural offer over the summer months. Some authorities are already using it as the focus of exciting multi-art form experiences through theatre, creative art and dance, and we aim to develop work in this area in the future to support the rollout of the ‘cultural offer’ to all authorities in time.

Local Area Agreements

A few English authorities have managed to use the SRC as part of the local authority’s LAA target setting and delivery plan. There is potential for this to grow. Reading for Life, the legacy campaign of the NYR will offer support for cross cutting reading strategies and The Reading Agency is currently developing new training to help libraries reflect and support national indicators and LAA priorities and targets through their reading services. The SRC provides a tangible model for joining up support for children’s reading across the authority and for developing an integrated approach to reading, through libraries working closely with schools and other partners.

Young people volunteering

Libraries have been highly successful in using volunteers, including young people, to help deliver the Summer Reading Challenge. Every local authority in England now has a duty to develop positive activities for young people, and also to develop and extend volunteering opportunities for people in the community. Libraries are now using the library ‘Youth Offer’ to achieve this with young people, and the SRC is a convenient and effective way of supporting the offer. We will be working to provide more resources and case studies to help more libraries to adopt this approach. There are benefits for libraries (increased capacity to deliver and support the SRC, and a closer connection to the community), for volunteers (newly acquired skills and confidence, the building of links across generations, and a chance to feel more part of the community) and for local authorities (support for national indicators on volunteering, positive activities, well-being and cohesion.). The Reading Agency’s new Participate programme can help library services develop their expertise and capacity to offer volunteering opportunities for young people, including to support the Challenge.

Finally

The Summer Reading Challenge is now a major force for children’s reading in the United Kingdom, and a major opportunity for libraries to demonstrate their relevance and contribution to a range of local and national agendas. It is an ideal initiative for engaging with families through partnerships with schools and family learning organisations. The Reading Agency looks forward to building on this success to take the Challenge into the next ten years.
Appendix 1: Charts

Numbers Starting & Completing by Authority Type

Numbers starting and completing divided by the number of authorities in each authority type answering both questions

Number Starting

Maximum: 38866
3rd Quartile: 3915
Median: 2141
1st Quartile: 1200
Minimum: 185

Number Completing

Maximum: 20664
3rd Quartile: 2378
Median: 1178
1st Quartile: 657
Minimum: 114

Mean number of children

Base: Authorities who answered both questions: 176

Number Starting

Quartiles:

Maximum 4731
3rd Quartile 3032
Median 2482
1st Quartile 1396
Minimum 593

Number Completing

Quartiles:

Maximum 2382
3rd Quartile 1826
Median 1301
1st Quartile 555
Minimum 364

Individual Authorities (i)

Number Starting

Quartiles:

Maximum 5466
3rd Quartile 4291
Median 3049
1st Quartile 2211
Minimum 1152

Number Completing

Quartiles:

Maximum 2990
3rd Quartile 2258
Median 1787
1st Quartile 1004
Minimum 531

Actual numbers of children

Each pair of bars is one authority; the first bar is the number of children starting, the second bar is the number of children completing.
Numbers Starting & Completing

Individual Authorities (ii)

For English Counties with over 8,000 participants, see next chart

Each pair of bars is one authority; the first bar is the number of children starting, the second bar is the number of children completing

Base: Authorities who answered both questions: 176

Numbers Starting & Completing

Individual Authorities (iii)

This chart has been produced on a different scale, to show larger numbers

Base: Authorities who answered both questions: 176

Each pair of bars is one authority; the first bar is the number of children starting, the second bar is the number of children completing

- 24 -
January 2009
Numbers Starting & Completing

Individual Authorities (iv)

- Each pair of bars is one authority; the first bar is the number of children starting, the second bar is the number of children completing.

Completion Rate
by Authority Type

- Mean 58%
- Quartiles:
  - Maximum 87%
  - 3rd Quartile 64%
  - Median 57%
  - 1st Quartile 48%
- Minimum 34%
- City of London 64%
- Inner London 52%
- Outer London 52%
- Metropolitan Districts 57%
- Unitary Authorities 59%
- English Counties 60%
- Wales 68%
- Scotland 55%
- Northern Ireland 58%
- Crown Dependencies 75%

Base: Authorities who answered both questions: 176
Gender Ratio
Individual Authorities (ii)

Base: Authorities who answered the question: 176

Gender Ratio
Individual Authorities (iii)

Base: Authorities who answered the question: 176
Change in Participant Numbers
by Authority Type

Base: Authorities who answered the question this year and last year: 156
Numbers starting and completing divided by the number of authorities in each authority type answering both questions

Change in Participant Numbers
Individual Authorities

Base: Authorities who answered the question this year and last year: 156
Quartiles:
Maximum 228%
3rd Quartile 120%
Median 106%
1st Quartile 96%
Minimum 63%

100% = same as number participating in Big Wild Read

City of London  Inner London  Outer London  Metropolitan Districts  Unitary Authorities  English Counties  Wales  Scotland  Northern Ireland  Crown Dependencies
### Numbers Starting and Completing

**by Region**

Numbers starting and completing divided by the number of authorities in each region answering both questions

**Number Starting**
- **Quartiles:**
  - Maximum: 7891
  - 3rd Quartile: 3870
  - Median: 2889
  - 1st Quartile: 1475
  - Minimum: 258

**Number Completing**
- **Quartiles:**
  - Maximum: 4248
  - 3rd Quartile: 2331
  - Median: 1564
  - 1st Quartile: 830
  - Minimum: 162

### Actual numbers of children

Each pair of bars is one authority; the first bar is the number of children starting, the second bar is the number of children completing

**Base: Authorities who answered both questions: 176**
Base: Authorities who answered both questions: 176

Numbers Starting and Completing
Individual Authorities by Region (ii)

North East
Number Starting
Quartiles:
Maximum 21893
3rd Quartile 6978
Median 2408
1st Quartile 1472
Minimum 1104
Number Completing
Quartiles:
Maximum 14565
3rd Quartile 3899
Median 1522
1st Quartile 797
Minimum 449

North West
Number Starting
Quartiles:
Maximum 1313
3rd Quartile 4841
Median 1977
1st Quartile 1327
Minimum 490
Number Completing
Quartiles:
Maximum 7274
3rd Quartile 3131
Median 849
1st Quartile 662
Minimum 177

South East
Number Starting
Quartiles:
Maximum 21893
3rd Quartile 6978
Median 2408
1st Quartile 1472
Minimum 1104
Number Completing
Quartiles:
Maximum 14565
3rd Quartile 3899
Median 1522
1st Quartile 797
Minimum 449

South West
Number Starting
Quartiles:
Maximum 9702
3rd Quartile 5440
Median 4205
1st Quartile 2528
Minimum 1419
Number Completing
Quartiles:
Maximum 6523
3rd Quartile 3669
Median 2500
1st Quartile 1502
Minimum 850

West Midlands
Number Starting
Quartiles:
Maximum 10934
3rd Quartile 4073
Median 2140
1st Quartile 2054
Minimum 1613
Number Completing
Quartiles:
Maximum 6159
3rd Quartile 2472
Median 1275
1st Quartile 1050
Minimum 865

Yorkshire
Number Starting
Quartiles:
Maximum 8135
3rd Quartile 4632
Median 1860
1st Quartile 1671
Minimum 870
Number Completing
Quartiles:
Maximum 6938
3rd Quartile 1520
Median 1070
1st Quartile 914
Minimum 531

Base: Authorities who answered both questions: 176

Numbers Starting and Completing
Individual Authorities by Region (iii)

South West
Number Starting
Quartiles:
Maximum 9702
3rd Quartile 5440
Median 4205
1st Quartile 2528
Minimum 1419
Number Completing
Quartiles:
Maximum 6523
3rd Quartile 3669
Median 2500
1st Quartile 1502
Minimum 850

West Midlands
Number Starting
Quartiles:
Maximum 10934
3rd Quartile 4073
Median 2140
1st Quartile 2054
Minimum 1613
Number Completing
Quartiles:
Maximum 6159
3rd Quartile 2472
Median 1275
1st Quartile 1050
Minimum 865

Yorkshire
Number Starting
Quartiles:
Maximum 8135
3rd Quartile 4632
Median 1860
1st Quartile 1671
Minimum 870
Number Completing
Quartiles:
Maximum 6938
3rd Quartile 1520
Median 1070
1st Quartile 914
Minimum 531

Each pair of bars is one authority; the first bar is the number of children starting, the second bar is the number of children completing.
Numbers Starting and Completing
Individual Authorities by Region (iv)

Each pair of bars is one authority; the first bar is the number of children starting, the second bar is the number of children completing.

Scotland
Number Starting
Quartiles:
Maximum 4670
3rd Quartile 1153
Median 394
1st Quartile 377
Minimum 97

Number Completing
Quartiles:
Maximum 2820
3rd Quartile 1860
Median 893
1st Quartile 871
Minimum 849

Wales
Number Starting
Quartiles:
Maximum 3373
3rd Quartile 1858
Median 1084
1st Quartile 613
Minimum 206

Number Completing
Quartiles:
Maximum 2451
3rd Quartile 1141
Median 460
1st Quartile 293
Minimum 98

Northern Ireland
Number Starting
Quartiles:
Maximum 3923
3rd Quartile 3074
Median 2224
1st Quartile 1961
Minimum 1697

Number Completing
Quartiles:
Maximum 2827
3rd Quartile 1860
Median 893
1st Quartile 871
Minimum 849

Crown Depend.
Number Starting
Quartiles:
Maximum 1657
3rd Quartile 1186
Median 714
1st Quartile 473
Minimum 221

Number Completing
Quartiles:
Maximum 1244
3rd Quartile 896
Median 547
1st Quartile 359
Minimum 171

Completion Rate
by Region

Quartiles:
Maximum 75%
3rd Quartile 59%
Median 58%
1st Quartile 56%
Minimum 52%

Base: Authorities who answered both questions: 176
Completion Rate
Individual Authorities

Change in Participant Numbers
by Region

Base: Authorities who answered both questions: 176
Base: Authorities who answered the question this year and last year: 156

Quartiles for Individual authority data:
Maximum 228%
3rd Quartile 120%
Median 106%
1st Quartile 96%
Minimum 63%

100% = same number participating in Big Wild Read
Appendix 2: Ten Years of the Summer Reading Challenge

Extrapolated results 1999 - 2008

![Graph showing extrapolated results 1999 - 2008](image)

Extrapolated Children's Issue Figures 1999 - 2008

![Graph showing extrapolated children's issue figures 1999 - 2008](image)

**Percentage breakdown between different age bands 2006 - 2008:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Team Read</th>
<th>Big Wild Read</th>
<th>Reading Mission</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Younger than 4 years</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aged 4-7 years</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aged 8-11 years</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aged 12 and older</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix 3: Website statistics and Stories from the Web report

Key achievements:

- Between June 11 and September 11 the Team Read website had over 227,000 visits from 141,500 visitors, twice as many as the previous SRC website.
- There were over 3.4 million page views, which is over 3 times as many as last year.
- Average visit duration was also up by 50% from 13 minutes to 19 minutes.
- The total of all messages and responses from visitors came to 88,700 – ten times as many as in 2007
- 91% of library authorities said that they felt the website worked well as a complement to the main Challenge, compared to 76% in 2007.

We received comments from parents who thought that the website was fun (which the children liked) and educational (which they liked).

Northumberland Libraries

Outline of site contents:
The Team Read website was themed around sports activities, games and teamwork, to reflect the Olympic Games. The website’s official launch date was 20th June 2008.

The Team Read website was ambitious in concept. For the first time, we created a login, so that children returning to the site could create their own on-line identity, and could come back to add to their games scores and update their record to show progress through the challenge.

The games had accrued scores, so the more children visited the site and played the games, the higher their score. They could join teams and all the team members’ scores were totalled to create a league table, appealing to children’s competitive spirit.

The Stadium
The home page was based on the design of the fold-out poster given out to children when they joined the Challenge. Visitors could walk around the stadium, triggering animations of some of the characters. Different parts of the site were reached by walking into different tunnels leading to rooms.

Stories from the Web
The Stories from the Web link was situated on one of the advertising hoardings around the Stadium, under the Big Screen. This took visitors to a special Team Read landing page with links through to Stories from the Web reviews and activities.

Games
The games were a mixture of skills based games and elements that furthered children’s knowledge and familiarity with books and authors.

Author Bowling Alley – a ten-pin bowling alley with authors featured on the bowling pins. Children could decide which author to place where. The game generates familiarity with the authors, showing an author photo and listing their most famous books.

Anyone for Tennis – a game of tennis where you answer book and sport questions to score points against your opponent.
Let’s all Chant – a game where you create your own versions of cheerleader chants with dance moves.

Bouncing books – trampolining game where you grab books from a height – introduces new book ideas.

Skate Escape – a skateboarding game of skill where you have to pick up books along the track.

A Question of Books – Based on the TV programme a Question of Sport. Six rounds of questions; some about books and some about sports, featuring famous first lines, recognising book covers, matching names to authors and sports stars and books/sports quiz.

**The Gym**
Here children could set up their on-screen character and keep a training record, where they could log their progress through the Team Read challenge.

**Favourite Books**
Children voted for their top 3 books, selecting from a database of 500 books most borrowed from libraries (from PLR).

The final Top 10 were:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Book 1</th>
<th>Author</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Horrid Henry</td>
<td>Francesca Simon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Candy Floss</td>
<td>Jacqueline Wilson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Giant Slice of Horrid Henry</td>
<td>Francesca Simon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Story of Tracy Beaker</td>
<td>Jacqueline Wilson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charlie and the Chocolate Factory</td>
<td>Roald Dahl</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Matilda</td>
<td>Roald Dahl</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Twits</td>
<td>Roald Dahl</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Starring Tracy Beaker</td>
<td>Jacqueline Wilson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harry Potter and the Philosopher’s Stone</td>
<td>J.K. Rowling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire</td>
<td>J.K. Rowling</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Coaches’ office**
Featured a new author blog each week of the summer holidays, plus blogs and Q & A responses from librarian ‘coaches’ – individuals and teams from different library authorities.

**Hall of Fame**
Showed the scores for the games – and the top 30 books. When children had read two, four or six books they could update their records and at each stage they were rewarded with a bronze silver or gold medal. Their character was shown on a podium, and from that point on would be wearing a medal.

**Big Screen**
For displaying messages. These were moderated and displayed as quickly as possible after children had submitted them.

**The locker room**
Here children could send in jokes and could find the hidden access to the Extreme Team Read login.

**Extreme Team Read**
This section of the website gave 11 year olds a forum for talking about topics such as starting a new school, and favourite summer time reading (post moderated), plus access to the extra games, and a personality quiz with book recommendations. They could also post photos of themselves and their pets.
Aims
The specific aims for the Team Read website were:

- To increase the numbers accessing the website (back up to levels of Reading Mission)
- To make visits to the website a more central part of the Challenge experience, giving children a real sense of achievement by moving them through levels of the challenge in a parallel to their experience in the library
- To encourage more dialogue between children and authors and illustrators
- To encourage more peer-to-peer book recommendations
- To offer ‘reading coaching’ through involving young people’s librarians as online coaches answering visitors’ reading questions.
- To create new transition web pages that libraries could promote to schools as a way of using the Summer Reading Challenge resources, using reading ideas to help students settle in to their new school.

Results
Analysis of visitors to the site
Analysis of the training records set up by visitors showed that 55,000 visitors signed up, and 31,487 got gold medals showing that they’d completed the Team Read challenge and read 6 books (57% - close to the average completion rate of 58%).

36% of training records were from boys, and 64% girls. Analysis of Big Wild Read messages indicated that the breakdown was 20% boys and 80% girls, so the site may have appealed to more boys than in the previous year.

Ages recorded were

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Group</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Under 4 years</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-7 years</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8-11 years</td>
<td>66%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12-14 years</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15-18 years</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adult (incl. teachers, librarians, volunteers)</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Volume of traffic
The response to the website was far greater than we had anticipated. This table shows the statistics for 11 June to 11 September for Team Read and the previous two Summer Reading Challenge websites:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2008 Team Read</th>
<th>2007 The Big Wild Read</th>
<th>2006 The Reading Mission</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Page Views</td>
<td>3,452,014</td>
<td>936,428</td>
<td>1,687,130</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average per Day</td>
<td>37,148</td>
<td>10,404</td>
<td>18,745</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average Page Views per Visit</td>
<td>15.19</td>
<td>8.47</td>
<td>10.72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visits</td>
<td>227,289</td>
<td>110,583</td>
<td>157,391</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average per Day</td>
<td>2.443</td>
<td>1.228</td>
<td>1.748</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
### Average Visit Duration
00:19:53 00:13:02 00:11:38

### Median Visit Duration
00:11:56 00:06:17 00:04:16

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Visitors</th>
<th>141,525</th>
<th>78,171</th>
<th>104,591</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Visitors Who Visited Once</td>
<td>103,898</td>
<td>62,318</td>
<td>86,005</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visitors Who Visited More Than Once</td>
<td>37,627</td>
<td>15,853</td>
<td>18,586</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average Visits per Visitor</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Messages

The number of messages sent in by visitors to the site was also far higher than we had estimated.

Total number of messages received 11 June to 11 September:

| Messages to the Big Screen | 50,900 |
| Jokes | 28,443 |
| Blog comments and questions | 5,683 |
| Extreme Team Read forum messages | 4,700 |

This compares to 8,000 messages received during the same period in 2007.

This chart shows the overall number of Team Read messages, with a breakdown between messages for the Big Screen, jokes for the locker room, blog replies for the Coaches’ office, and comments for the Extreme Team Read Forum:

At its peak the traffic for messages reached 12,384 in a week, with nearly 7,000 in one day.
Link to Stories from the Web

Whilst the Team Read complementary activities on Stories from the Web were very successful for subscribing library authorities, the link to Stories from the Web from the Team Read site was clearly not prominent enough, as the site received considerably fewer visits than previous years (see following report). The link didn’t ‘glow’ when the mouse hovered over it, and it wasn’t animated. This meant that most children didn’t spot the link and click through to Stories from the Web. We hoped to add an additional link from another part of the site, but this was not achieved within the summer time frame. We will ensure a better link is set up for the next website, and liaise more closely with the Stories from the Web developers.

Interaction with authors and library staff

The site featured 10 blogs from children’s authors during the summer and 20 blogs from library staff acting as Team Read ‘coaches’ – answering questions from the children about recommended books to read. This section worked well, receiving 5,683 questions and comments.

I liked its interactivity this year and the children enjoyed this aspect. From a personal viewpoint, having a blog was a hugely enjoyable experience and allowed me to engage with people from all parts of the country.

Luton Libraries

I thought this year’s site was great fun and well laid out. We very much enjoyed being ‘Team Coaches’ and were impressed by the range of questions the children asked.

Norfolk Libraries

Technical Issues

30% of authorities reported problems with access to the site. Some referred to the requirement to download Flash 9, but most problems related to access being denied by the filtering set up by the local authority, as ‘games’ are blocked. This restriction could be lifted by the IT department.

Some comments from authorities were that the site was hard to navigate, others that the unlocking of the Extreme Team Read section was too hard to work out. We added an extra hint during the summer to try to give more guidance, and children also helped each other with messages on the Big Screen.

The volume of traffic when the site was launched caused the website to respond too slowly and at one point it ground to a halt and stopped responding, requiring the site to be taken offline for a day and work to be done by Reading Room.

Recommendations

- **Site to be accessible to library staff earlier if possible, to allow more time for training and familiarisation with contents.**
- **Simple downloadable instructions to be available as a handout, with guidance on how to use the site.**
- **Improve the blogging tool to make it easier for library staff to respond to comments and questions.**
- **Improve the link with Stories from the Web for children to access for sharing book reviews.**
Stories from the Web supports Team Read 2008

Stories from the Web supported Team Read by providing the facility for children and young people participating to send in book reviews throughout Team Read, the Stories from the Web team moderated the reviews and displayed those that were appropriate for the intended age range on the Stories from the Web site.

This year like last year the Team Read website did not include a specific author habitat focused area relating to a collection of authors or specific authors/book titles as in previous years. As there was no direct correlation from specific author/book pages it wasn’t possible to develop a specific Team Read index page on Stories from the Web to collect statistical information as in previous Summer Reading Challenges prior to the Big Wild Read website of 2007. Children and young people being directed to Stories from the Web were linked through to the general Stories from the Web review area which is available throughout the year on www.storiesfromtheweb.org to encourage them to review any authors and books they read during the summer.

Statistics
The number of hits to the Stories from the Web site by children and young people being directed from the Team Read site totalled 8241 during the summer period.

Reader development activity on Stories from the Web
The Stories from the Web site is available for children and young people throughout the whole year. A range of activities were on open access for site users to provide further activity relating to the theme for children and young people participating in Team Reads. For children and young people living in member authorities there were additional ‘Key’ activities for them to enjoy around the National Year of Reading monthly themes, one of which was The August theme of Read the Game, with a specific focus on sport and sport related book activities. Summer NYR monthly themed activities are outlined below.

Activity to support children, young people and member authorities on the Stories from the Web site throughout the summer 2008

Activity for 7-11 year olds using Stories from the Web included:
Links to the Stories from the Web summer National Year of Reading monthly activities.

June NYR Activities – Theme: Fantasy Worlds
Open to all Stories from the Web visitors:
Writing Activity: Write a story about a world you’ve discovered.

Children living in Stories from the Web member authorities were able to take part in the following ‘key’ activity available to members only;
Print out and build 3D Paper Toy fantasy characters.

July NYR Activities – Theme: Poetry and Lyrics
Open to all Stories from the Web visitors:
Links to some poems from Michael Rosen’s Centrally Heated Knickers poetry collection.

Children living in Stories from the Web member authorities were able to take part in the following ‘key’ activity available to members only;
Writing Activity: Write your own alien poem.
Game: The word mix up game.

August NYR Activities – Theme: Read the Game
Open to all Stories from the Web visitors:
Links to an extract from Bali Rai’s Soccer Squad – Starting Eleven.

Children living in Stories from the Web member authorities were able to take part in the following ‘key’ activity available to members only:
Writing Activity: Describe yourself taking a crucial penalty kick.
Game: Keepy Uppy Soccer Game.
Links to famous sport stars talking about their famous books.

Activity for 11-14 year olds using Stories from the Web included;
Links to the Stories from the Web summer National Year of Reading monthly activities.

June NYR Activities – Theme: Fantasy Worlds
Open to all Stories from the Web visitors:
Writing Activity: Write a story about an alternative world
Links to a range of fantasy books featured on the SFW bookshelf.

Children living in Stories from the Web member authorities were able to take part in the following ‘key’ activity available to members only;
Print out and build 3D Paper Toy fantasy characters.

July NYR Activities – Theme: Poetry and Lyrics
Open to all Stories from the Web visitors:
Writing activities – Write a poem/Write a song/Write a rap
Game: Fridge magnet game
Links to a range of poetry books featured on the SFW bookshelf.

Children living in Stories from the Web member authorities were able to take part in the following ‘key’ activity available to members only;
Writing Activity: Environment poems – Nature/Enviro Poetree

August NYR Activities – Theme: Read the Game
Open to all Stories from the Web visitors:
Writing Activity: Write a short story about your favourite Olympic sport.
Links to a range of sport books featured on the SFW bookshelf.
Game: Soccerdoku sudoku styled game.

Children living in Stories from the Web member authorities were able to take part in the following ‘key’ activity available to members only;
Links to famous sport stars talking about their famous books.
Appendix 4: Partnerships

Partnerships between libraries and other local authority organisations

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<thead>
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<td>13</td>
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<td>66</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>50</td>
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<td>11</td>
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<td>Gifted and Talented</td>
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<td>1</td>
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<td>Special Schools</td>
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<td>49</td>
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<td>Summer Splash groups</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>4</td>
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<td>Young Offenders</td>
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<td>5</td>
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<td>Family Reading Groups</td>
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<td>22</td>
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<td>Chatterbooks Group(s)</td>
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<td>Family Centres</td>
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<td>Children’s Centres</td>
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<td>98</td>
<td>57</td>
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<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>851</td>
<td>910</td>
<td>705</td>
<td>363</td>
<td>307</td>
<td>204</td>
<td>119</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

10 authorities used Team Read with Playing with Success
Other partners included: Sports Development Units, Leisure Centres, Museums, PCTs and Health Visitors, District Councils, Community Engagement, Family Learning, Fire Brigade.

Partnerships with Commercial Organisations

Barnsley  Support from the local Radio Station for Medal Events.
Bedfordshire sponsorship by Costa Coffee

Asda - money for prizes
JP Morgan - money for prizes

Bournemouth Marks & Spencer - gift vouchers

three lots of family tickets from Alton Towers (used in raffle)
ChesterZoo

Cheshire  Alton Towers - sent 12 paid entrance passes.

Derbyshire Alton Towers - sent free passes for bowling sessions.

Doncaster Doncaster Rovers - tour of Keepmoat Stadium for 10 children plus an accompanying adult

Prizes given by local tourist attractions such as Dudley Zoo, West Midlands Safari Park, sporting games from local shops including Woolworths.
The following sponsors provided family passes/book tokens in the case of the bookshop, for children who were winners in the big prize draw which takes place at the end of the SRC:

Our Dynamic Earth
Edinburgh Leisure
Odeon Cinema
Deep Sea World

Edinburgh
Blackwell Bookshop

Tesco gave box of chocolates
Leisure Centre gave free swim vouchers
Cattle Country gave 2 free visits per library

Gloucestershire
Gloucester Rugby Club provided venue for one of launch events.

Tesco gave box of chocolates
Leisure Centre gave free swim vouchers
Lylkwan Martial Arts Schools provided workshops in libraries and free taster sessions

Guernsey
Local Leisure Centre gave swimming vouchers to all who completed the Challenge.
Merlin Entertainments (Chessington and Legoland) provided discount vouchers for all children participating and free passes which we used for completers prize draw.
Clerical Medical International - competition prizes, additional incentives, £100 book tokens for the school with the most number of completers, hands on help at events, refreshments for the medal ceremony.
Strand Cleaners sponsored our Olympic Quiz

Isle of Man
The Arts Council Isle of Man sponsored a sports writing competition

As a result of the partnership with KCC Sport Development Unit, we had commercial support from

P&O and Octopus Travel. They gave us prizes of trips to Disneyland Paris Resort.

Leicester City
Explore Learning - literacy workshops.

Local Building Societies
Local theme parks
Leicestershire County Cricket Club
Leicester Tigers
Leicester City Football Club
Loughborough University
Other local businesses and organisations
Local newspaper

Support offered: free entry tickets to be used as prizes and incentives, money for prizes and incentives, offer of a venue and other support for a launch event.

Lincolnshire
Royal Enterprises; London Eye; Leeds castle; Imperial War Museum; Diggerland; London transport Museum; Merlin Entertainments Group; Museum of Kent Life; Not Really Books; Charlton Athletic

Leicestershire
Lincolnshire

London Borough of Bexley
Offered free/discounted tickets/books to be used as prizes.

London Borough of Islington
Rainforest Cafe, London Eye, Arsenal FC, London Aquarium, Sealife Centres
Costa offered 5p for every book read to a local charity called Keech Cottage Hospice. Working in partnership with Bedfordshire authority, the total amount raised came to £6000 which was handed over at a special awards ceremony.

Merthyr Tydfil
Local businesses have been extremely helpful this year in providing some prizes.
Local beauty shop - a manicure for a mum or dad of a child that has completed the scheme.
Tesco - gift vouchers
Brecon Railway - free tickets
Council Waste Awareness - Fun bags

Free Family ticket to the Fireworks Show courtesy of MTCBC Events Dept.

North Yorkshire
Various firms  Prizes

Boyes Store  Ribbon for medals
Leisure centres  Free tickets for prizes
Northamptonshire
- Wicksteed Park - donation for events and prizes for our prize draw for children completing.
- Prizes from the following:-
  - Rockingham Motor Speedway
  - Silverstone
  - Northants Cricket
  - Northampton Saints

Northumberland
- Rushden & Diamonds
  - Leisure Tynedale, part of North Country Leisure - provided questions, indoor tennis equipment and a family swim voucher for a sports quiz.

Oxfordshire
- Bertrams Library Services - supplied sports books for prizes.
- Some prizes for a book review competition - mainly WH Smith
- The Chelsea Building Society - 35 £10 book vouchers for children who finished the SRC. Several were chosen by prize draw from each branch and invited to a prize giving ceremony

Royal Borough of Kingston-upon-Thames
- DC Leisure - gave us free swim and play vouchers to give to children who read 4 books
- Kent Book Company - gave us a £200 voucher to present to the school with the most SRC completers

Salford
- Salford Reds Rugby League
- 800 free entrance for final match of season (children and adults)

Jersey
- Channel Island Co-operative Society donated £100 worth of vouchers for our prize draw winners (everyone completing challenge is entered)
- Showcase Cinemas - provided free cinema tickets as Team Read prizes.
- All branches promoted the cinema's Bookworm Wednesdays running throughout the holidays, giving out book review sheets for children to complete and return to the cinema, in order to see the Wednesday morning films. Positive feedback was received from the cinema, indicating that this year's programme of screenings proved very popular, with the help of the library promotion.

Salford
- Corner to Learn - time and prizes
- Child's Play International - prizes
- Anderson Press - prizes
- Cotswold Wildlife Park - prizes
- STEAM - prizes

Swindon
- Oasis Leisure Centre - prizes
- New Charter Housing Trust

Tameside
- Only for prizes for draw for children completing e.g. large cuddly teddy bear from Cwmbran shopping, books from library supplier. We approached fewer companies than in previous years. The Mayor funded the first prize of a bicycle of the winner's choice up to £100, and one of our Writers' groups a £20 voucher for children participating in the library they meet in. Torfaen Sports Development provide a place at the October Half Term Active Young People's 'camp'.

Torfaen
- We had sponsorship from Techniquest who donated prizes of 9 family tickets to each library for our Treasure Hunt in house competitions.

Vale of Glamorgan
- We had sponsorship from Techniquest who donated prizes of 9 family tickets to each library for our Treasure Hunt in house competitions.

Warwickshire
- Complete Learning Centre - ran events in 2 libraries
- Monkey Music - ran event in 1 library

West Sussex
- Waterstones donated some books as prizes for the Big Speed Read event

Worcestershire
- Evesham Leisure Centre donated prize for draw for all children who completed Team read
- Sports equipment donated by Asda, signed football from York City plus tickets for match. Cash donated for further prizes by Marks and Spencers. Glove puppets and books donated by Nestle plus sweets.
Appendix 5: Policy context

How the Summer Reading Challenge supports key policy areas

The Summer Reading Challenge helps libraries to deliver on national and local policy agendas. The Challenge helps libraries to reach more children, to increase library visits and borrowing, and to make a real difference to children’s confidence and reading development as evidenced by research.9

The Summer Reading Challenge helps deliver on the key outcomes of Every Child Matters10 through:

- welcoming children into libraries and providing safe and supportive reading environments (staying safe)
- celebrating diversity/other cultures (being healthy, staying safe)
- supporting learning, encouraging reading enjoyment, rewarding achievement and strengthening partnership work with schools (enjoying and achieving),
- encouraging involvement in the library service (making a positive contribution)

The Summer Reading Challenge also presents valuable opportunities for the joined up and partnership working which lies at the heart of the Every Child Matters agenda.

The Summer Reading Challenge is a key way in which libraries contribute to local performance priorities and targets through

- helping children to keep enjoying reading over the summer, and maintaining or improving their reading competence“ (‘raising educational achievement’)
- helping to engage children from disadvantaged families and encouraging them as readers (‘narrowing the gap’)
- helping children to participate in positive activities in the community over the summer holidays (‘Increase the number of children on the path to success’)

The Summer Reading Challenge supports local authorities to demonstrate their performance against the new National Indicators and Local Area Agreements12, with their focus on stronger communities (including targets for cultural services) and their mandatory targets for children and young people.

In October 2007, the Department for Communities and Local Government cited the Summer Reading Challenge as an example of a national programme which delivers value for money. “By developing and applying national programmes such as … the Summer Reading Challenge (which engages children and young people in reading activities over the summer holiday), individual authorities are saved the expenditure of devising and implementing their own programme.”13.

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9 Inspiring Children: The Impact of the Summer Reading Challenge, Product Perceptions Ltd on behalf of The Reading Agency 2003
10 Every Child Matters, DfES, 2003 www.everychildmatters.gov.uk
11 See Inspiring children, TRA, 2003
12 See guidance on Local Area Agreements via www.communities.gov.uk
13 Delivering value for local government: meeting the challenge of CSR07, DCLG, October 2007
OECD research\textsuperscript{14} showed that children who enjoy reading perform better at school, and the national impact study Inspiring Children\textsuperscript{15} provided evidence of the contribution that the Summer Reading Challenge makes to children’s confidence and enjoyment of reading.

OFSTED’s report ‘Reading for purpose and pleasure’ identified the value of children reading widely, and the importance of parental support, including visits to the local library. The Summer Reading Challenge has an important role to play in encouraging reading for pleasure. Children read more books because of the challenge; they enjoy choosing books for themselves from the library, they read more widely (new authors, different kinds of books) and they enjoy taking part in the challenge and want to read more books after the challenge is complete. Children who take part in the Challenge are likely to take part again the following year, suggesting it helps to establish a reading habit, encouraging children to see themselves as readers\textsuperscript{16}.

Reading is a creative activity in itself\textsuperscript{17} and through events and activities linked to the Summer Reading Challenge, such as author events, drama, music and visual arts, library staff feed children’s creativity, making links between their reading and other cultural experiences, supporting the Creativity and cultural entitlement agenda and activity in the new Find Your Talent pathfinder authorities.

The Department for Education and Skills’ Five Year Strategy for children and learners, the Children’s Plan and guidance on the national curriculum\textsuperscript{18} all stress the importance of literacy, and have a key focus on personalised learning and helping individual children on the path to success. Libraries offering the Summer Reading Challenge encourage children’s wider and independent reading, develop their active participation and help improve confidence and self esteem, as well as reading skills.

It is widely accepted that where children engage in out of school activities on a voluntary basis, this can have a powerful and positive impact on their learning within school. The Summer Reading Challenge provides an opportunity for Out of hours learning activity during the summer holidays at a time when other extended provision may not be so readily available.

Framework for the Future, the governments’ 10 year vision for public libraries, highlighted the role of the Summer Reading Challenge in encouraging reading in the summer holidays and minimising the ‘summer learning dip’. It identified the scheme as an important model for how libraries can work together nationally to make a consistent offer to key target groups, with very positive outcomes for children.

\textsuperscript{14} OECD, Reading for change, 2002
\textsuperscript{15} Inspiring children, TRA, 2003
\textsuperscript{16} Inspiring children, TRA, 2003
\textsuperscript{17} DEMOS Creative Reading: Young People , Reading and Public Libraries 2004
\textsuperscript{18} National curriculum programmes of study (http://curriculum.qca.org.uk/) and the Primary Framework for Literacy and Mathematics (http://www.standards.dfes.gov.uk/primaryframeworks/)
Appendix 6: British Council Interim Evaluation Report

• Background

This is the fifth year that the British Council has worked with the Reading Agency to deliver the Reading Challenge overseas. The British Council runs the challenge using the same principles as in the UK but we run the challenge throughout the year and often work with partners enabling us to reach a wider audience, not just in terms of the number of children taking part, but also in promoting the value of reading to parents, teachers, education officials and others. We refer to the project as the ‘Reading Challenge’ to allow us to use the materials and run reading events at the most appropriate times of the year – to fit in with school terms, specific courses or local events.

As many British Council offices are still running the challenge or have yet to start, this report is an interim evaluation of the project and has been produced to feed into the Reading Agency’s evaluation of the Summer Reading Challenge in the UK. A full evaluation of British Council activity will be produced towards the end of the financial year.

• Theme

This year’s theme, sports, is extremely resonant with current British Council work advocating sports and activity as part of promoting healthy lifestyles. The British Council runs a number of programmes in this area and uses popular sports such as football, as an effective way to engage with our audiences around the world. The quality and range of the promotional materials were excellent and proved popular with British Council staff and customers, especially the gold, silver and bronze stickers for the posters.

• Orders

There were a similar number of offices involved in this year’s Summer Reading Challenge as in 2007, and we had a number of countries taking part for the first time. In total 41 offices in 23 countries took part and they ordered 38.5 sets of the younger book collection and 59.5 sets of the older collection. A list of locations is at the end of this report. Many offices ordered multiple sets of books and materials which will be loaned or donated to local schools, libraries, youth organisations and other partners so that more children can take part in the challenge. Staff from the British Council use the training materials produced by the Reading Agency to run training sessions for staff from other organisations so they can run the challenge themselves. It is anticipated that at least 15,000 children will take part in the challenge over the year.

• Activities

As mentioned, this is feedback from a few of our offices who have already run or are currently running the challenge, many have yet to do so and this information will be available by April 2009.

  o Jordan – staff invested in the good relationship with the adjacent school, using their playground to run summer-sport skills sessions in basketball, football and martial arts. With expert trainers, young learners practised what they learned about from the Team Read books, transferring the written word into fun activities with sports, and in this way exercised their minds and muscles at the same time.

  o Italy – staff in the British Council Teaching Centre worked with 4 classes of 13-14 year olds (14 in each class). They ran the challenge as a library with a discussion every other class where students
could talk about the books they were currently reading. Jeff Fowler (Senior Teacher, Young Learners) commented: “One positive thing I have noticed is that the children are actively asking me to change books and have needed no pushing. The general feeling is that they are enjoying reading these books which certainly hasn’t been the case when I have encouraged them to read ‘readers’ (graded English language books).”

- **India, Chennai** – the Team Read was publicised among the Young Learners Centre and family members. Parents were encouraged to help introduce their children to the world of reading. The Reading Challenge is currently running from 1st November until 31st December for children aged 7–12. 222 children have enrolled to take part. Various workshops have been organised including:

  - **a text and picture** workshop where children were randomly paired with each other. Each pair was given a black and white picture from the Team Read titles. The children had to come up with a short story or write up based on the picture (this story did not have to match the original). Halfway through the session they were then given a selected poem or piece of text and had to come up with a picture to match the text.

  - **a lucky dip** workshop where children will select one of 15 envelopes each containing a different word related to sports. They have to develop a story, poem or song based on the word in the envelope.

  - **an expressions** workshop (for 7-9 year olds) where the children will be given five different expressions associated with five different sports. The children will draw and describe them.

  - **a posters** workshop (for 10-12 year olds) where the children will pick a picture of their favourite sports star in action, draw a grid on the picture and then copy the small pictures into a fresh sheet to create their own poster drawings of the picture.

- **India, Kolkata** – staff have organised special Team Read events and workshops on leadership development, team building, magazine cover designing, report writing and exploring the science of sport. These workshops involved the children in many ways, to help them learn about sports and the benefits. The objective was to engage the children’s creativity and ingenuity, and help them express their views through different forums. The challenge ends on 20 December when the children finish reading 6 books, attend 8 workshops and receive their medals and certificates of achievement.

**Comments from the facilitators:**

“**It is surprising to find children so aware of their environment and the role that they have to play in it. They are conscious and would like to make a positive impact in every small thing that they do. The magazine designing workshop was a surprise as the imagination of the children in representing sports was amazing.**”  
**Paul Walsh**

"The children had created their own games and had written the details of the games with their rules during the creative writing workshop and some of them were brilliant ideas for group games."  
**Richa Wahi**

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4.5 **Spain, Valencia** – staff are currently still running the Reading Challenge. Each week (Primary classes and July classes) or fortnight (Junior classes during year) the librarian takes a tub of pre-selected books into the classroom from which each child chooses one. When returning the book on the librarian’s next visit, the children have to hand in a picture (Primary) for which they receive stickers (these pictures are displayed in...
the library window) or a Summary and Opinion Feedback form (Juniors). The pictures/forms are placed in simple paper folders for each student and returned to them at the end of the term/July, including a Team Read Certificate for those who complete the task of reading 4 books. Ros Rice (Libraries Manager) commented: “The Reading Challenge is hugely popular, both with the students who participate, and the teachers. Indeed, teachers clamour to be one of the “privileged” chosen classes.”

**The future**

The Reading Challenge generates much enthusiasm from the British Council offices that take part and the quality of the books and materials continues to excite and motivate the children they reach around the world to get involved and to engage with reading.

A more formalised evaluation of the project will take place in March/April and the results from this will inform the future development of the Reading Challenge, particularly with regard to partnership working.

We will continue to run the Reading Challenge and are currently looking to integrate it into a larger global project on Reader Development. This would give the Reading Challenge much greater exposure around the British Council network as part of a package of reader development activities.

**British Council offices taking part in Team Read**

- **Bulgaria** - Sofia
- **Botswana** - Gaborone
- **Burma** - Rangoon
- **Colombia** - Bogota
- **Egypt** - Alexandria, Cairo
- **France** - Paris
- **Greece** - Athens
- **India** - Ahmedabad, Chandigarh, Chennai, Kolkata, Mumbai, New Delhi, Pune
- **Italy** - Naples
- **Jordan** - Amman
- **Kazakhstan** - Almaty
- **Kuwait** - Kuwait City
- **Mexico** - Mexico City
- **Palestinian Territories** - Ramallah
- **Portugal** - Coimbra, Lisbon, Porto
- **Qatar** - Doha
- **Romania** - Bucharest, Cluj, Iasi
- **Singapore**
- **Spain**- Bilbao, Madrid, Segovia, Somosaguas, Valencia, Villavicosia
- **Sri Lanka** - Colombo, Kandy
- **Thailand** - Chiang Mai
- **Uzbekistan** - Tashkent
- **Vietnam** - Hanoi, Ho Chi Minh City