

How to run the Six Book Challenge 2010

We hope you will find this information useful. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Genevieve Clarke at genevieve.clarke@readingagency.org.uk or on 0871 750 2104.

These guidelines are for organisations which are running the Challenge from January – June 2010. Please use them as a flexible checklist which you can adapt to your own circumstances. The scheme can be run at any point during the year but we encourage people to use this timescale in order to benefit from any prizes on offer and to get the maximum number of participants taking part at the same time.

Preparing for the Challenge: November/December 2009

- 1. Make contact with potential partners.** These may be organisations with whom you already work or this may be the opportunity to set up new links. They could include:
 - Public libraries
 - Adult & Community Learning
 - FE or community college
 - Prison library or education departments
 - Trade union learning reps in local workplaces
 - Local workplace training providers
 - Voluntary sector groups working with adult literacy learners
 - Family learning providers
 - Extended schools
 - Children's centres
 - Neighbourhood groups
- 2. Promotional materials.** There is an A5 flyer in the Six Book Challenge pack designed to promote the Six Book Challenge to new partners and to colleagues. You can also download the Six Book Challenge 2010 partnership powerpoint from the [website](#) and adapt it for your local situation. Please also show the short film from the home page of the [website](#) to potential partners to explain how the scheme works.
- 3. Partnership aims and outcomes.** Talk through the key aims and outcomes that you and any partner organisations hope to achieve through the Challenge. It will be crucial to the success of the partnership that you have agreed some shared objectives. These might be:

- To encourage more learners to get into the reading habit
- To increase library membership and use among learners
- To inspire more learners to talk and write about their reading experiences
- To make it easier for learning providers to integrate reading for pleasure into their work with learners
- To start a reading group

4. **Evidence.** Decide at the outset how you are going to collect both quantitative and qualitative evidence during the Challenge. The Reading Agency will ask you to send in quantitative data on participation by 7 July 2010.

5. **Target audience.** Decide upon how you will target potential Challenge participants. Can the scheme be woven into a regular literacy class? Is this an opportunity to set up a book club or reading group for adult literacy students? Could it be a way of attracting new learners to your services? Can you use it to encourage people to use your learning centre?

6. **Books.** The books recommended for the scheme are those appropriate for emergent readers – adults who can read but who have yet to build reading enjoyment and experience (Entry Level 3/Level 1 in Skills for Life terminology). However, the scheme can be used with adults at a lower literacy level and ESOL learners as long as books that are sufficiently appealing and accessible are available.

There is no ‘set’ of books for the Challenge but The Reading Agency has identified more than 600 fiction and non-fiction at an appropriate level for emergent readers to support libraries and learning providers offering the scheme. These are listed on our searchable [First Choice Books](#) database and include the Quick Reads and other titles specially published for emergent readers.

7. **Working with the library.** You may be running the Six Book Challenge from or with the public library service or your college library. According to their role, library staff will need to be confident about:

- Talking to local partners about the Challenge
- Visiting a class or group of learners to talk about the Challenge and promote the right books
- Welcoming Challenge participants to the library, stamping their reading diaries and recording their progress on the participation record
- Helping them to choose their books
- Running creative reading activities to support the Challenge

8. **Registering Challenge participants.** Use the Six Book Challenge invitations to introduce the scheme to potential participants. If they are keen to join up there and then,

ask them to complete the Six Book Challenge registration form downloadable from the [website](#)

Completed forms should be kept centrally so that one person in the organisation running the Six Book Challenge has an idea of how many people will start the Challenge. You will need to transfer every participant's name to the participation record (also downloadable from the [website](#) so that you can keep an overall record of participants' progress for evaluation purposes.

Running the Challenge: January – June 2010

1) Launch. In order to launch the Challenge make sure that you have good access to a range of appealing books – you may want to run a launch event in the library or arrange for library staff to visit the Challenge participants.

The first session, ideally in early January, needs to include the following activity:

- give out reading diaries and explain how the Challenge works (for recordkeeping purposes you could number these to tally with participants' names listed on the participation record)
- display Quick Reads and First Choice titles for learners to choose from
- give out a Six Book Challenge bookmark with every book issued as a first giveaway
- suggest a time at which participants take their first book back to the library or bring it back to the class or group involved
- encourage participants to take their reading diary whenever they visit the library so that it can be stamped when books are returned

Wherever the first session is held, it will be important for participants to meet a member of library staff who they might see when they visit the library. Remember that the library can be quite daunting for people who are not confident readers.

2) Maintaining momentum. Once participants have begun the Challenge, it will be important to keep the momentum up if they want to complete six books between January and the end of June, but only at a pace that suits them. Some participants may complete the Challenge in two weeks; others may take several months. Above all, it should be an enjoyable experience.

You will find a downloadable Key Dates Planner on the [website](#) but please treat this timetable as a rough indicator of how the Challenge might run over the period from January to June and adapt it for your own planning.

Keep in touch with any groups or individuals taking the Challenge. This may mean visiting classes or groups on a regular basis to supply them with books or arranging tours of the library.

We have included a book recommendation leaflet as part of the pack this year and this should be given out when participants are asking what they might read next. There are also a number of branded incentives for purchase from The Reading Agency [shop](#) –

keyrings, mugs, pens and fridge magnets. We suggest you supplement these with local incentives. These could be anything from tea or coffee to vouchers for free DVD hire, goody bags of library freebies or giveaways such as environmentally-friendly book bags or free books.

3) Supporting participants. The beauty of the scheme is that it can be run to suit individual participants and local circumstances. Learners may simply want to use the library to choose each book with no extra support from staff or tutors. But it also allows scope for a range of associated activity either within the library or beyond, the aim being to make participants feel part of a community of readers. This might range from a lively Six Book Challenge noticeboard to friendly events at which they can swap book recommendations and compare notes on the Challenge.

Please see the Six Book Challenge [website](#) for case studies and ideas and The Reading Agency [website](#) for general guidance about working with emergent readers. You will find sets of downloadable resources to support all the Quick Reads titles.

4) Celebrating. Celebration is a major part of the Challenge and should happen at every stage as participants complete each book and choose another. But completion of the Challenge deserves special recognition and is a fine excuse for an award ceremony for those who are happy to have their achievement marked in this way. Make sure that a date and location for this are set well in advance. This will be the point at which you can present the Six Book Challenge certificates and any local prizes to those who have completed the Challenge. Popular prizes have included free books, tickets for local events or an engraved pen. The award ceremony provides a great opportunity to invite all those library and learning provider staff and participants involved and to promote your partnership and the Challenge. See the [website](#) for examples of celebrations in 2009.

5) Prize draws. We have been able to offer Six Book Challenge completers the chance to enter a national prize draw in 2008 and 2009. We hope this will also be the case for 2010 and will keep everyone posted with details and information about how to enter.

6) Evaluating. The Reading Agency will be asking organisations to complete an evaluation survey which includes questions about numbers of participants, gender, age, ethnic background, and their progress. So please note that it will be important to use the downloadable registration form and participation record to collect this data.

You may also want to run a local evaluation with partner organisations. You will see a couple of questions opposite Book 6 in the Reading Diary designed to tease out attitudes to the Six Book Challenge. With the permission of participants, library staff and tutors may want to photocopy pages from participants' diaries for evaluation purposes. The Reading Agency may also invite you to send these in as part of its qualitative evidence.

The deadline for receipt of data from participating organisations will be 7 July 2010. The Reading Agency will be supplying guidance and paperwork for this in due course.

Again, please contact us if you have any questions about the Six Book Challenge – see the [website](#) or email genevieve.clarke@readingagency.org.uk

Enjoy the Challenge!

The Reading Agency
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