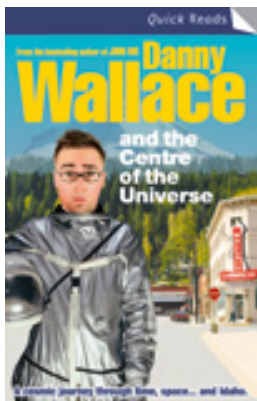
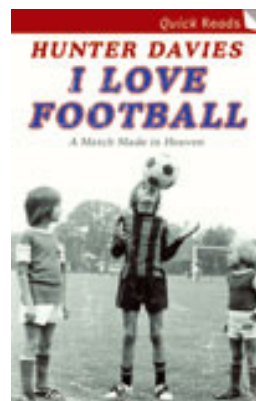




Private Passions



The Centre of the Universe
 Danny Wallace



I Love Football
 Hunter Davies



Contents

Activity 1	Private passions	3
Handout 1	Extract from <i>The Centre of the Universe</i>	5
Handout 2	Extract from <i>I Love Football</i>	7
	Further development	9
	More reading	11
	Adult Literacy Core Curriculum References	13

Acknowledgement

The learning materials to accompany the Quick Reads publications have been produced as part of The Vital Link's Reading for Pleasure campaign, funded by the Department for Education and Skills and in cooperation with World Book Day. Our thanks go to the writing and editorial team of Nancy Gidley, Kay Jackaman and Moreen Mowforth.

**The
Vital
Link**

www.vitallink.org.uk

Activity 1

Private Passions

<p>Purpose</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➔ To explore personal motivation for the pursuit of particular interests. ➔ To consider the variety of ways in which an enthusiasm or passion can be conveyed to engage others.
<p>Resources</p>	<p>Copies of <i>The Centre of the Universe</i> Copies of <i>I Love Football</i> Handouts 1 and 2: Book extracts Internet access Pens, paper</p>
<p>Activity</p>	<p>Both the titles in this theme are about subjects that have interested the author and become a passion that they wish to share with an audience. Many people develop an interest or 'private passion' that they want to find out more about. It may be a sport, a team, a hobby or, in the case of Danny Wallace, something that has sparked his curiosity. The writers hope to convey their enjoyment, and spark curiosity and enthusiasm in their readers.</p> <p>Before reading the book ask the readers why they might choose these particular titles. Was it because of the subject matter or because of the author? Non-fiction books are usually chosen because of their subject matter, but books by writers familiar to readers through other media channels may be chosen because of the author.</p> <p>The extracts on Handouts 1 and 2 reflect how these particular writers became interested in their subject. Read the extracts together and discuss with the readers what it was that sparked the author's interest. People are motivated to do something for a variety of reasons, e.g.:</p>

continued ➔

<p>Activity</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to find out more • to achieve a goal or ambition • to learn a new skill • to answer a question • to share knowledge <p>Discuss with readers what they feel motivated the authors to pursue their passion.</p> <p>Which chapters of the books did readers find particularly engaging, and why?</p>
<p>Reflection</p>	<p>After reading the books, ask the group to identify an interest they feel passionate about. They may share the same passion as the authors.</p> <p>Using the text, readers can compare and contrast their own experiences with the writers, considering factors such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • what/who inspired them • why they became passionate about their interest • how it affects them (have they joined a club or organisation? Do they engage in an activity? Do they share their interest with others, and if so, how?) <p>Readers could use the Internet and/or books or magazines to further research their interest and write an article or create a 'Factfile' about it aiming to encourage other people to develop a passion for it too. Both Danny Wallace and Hunter Davies speak directly to the reader through the text, but have very different styles. Readers might like to consider the difference between the 'stream of consciousness' approach of Danny Wallace and the more traditional narrative of Hunter Davies and decide which of them would best convey their own passion to their readers.</p>
<p>Development</p>	<p>Both authors have made a living out of their private passions by writing about them and sharing their knowledge and enthusiasm with others. Can the readers suggest other examples of individuals who have turned a passion into a business or lifestyle? For example, Jamie Oliver has turned his passion for good food into a business and a charity.</p> <p>The March Quick Reads <i>How to Change Your Life in 7 Steps</i> by John Bird and <i>Screw It, Let's Do It</i> by Richard Branson provide examples of how passions – business, personal and altruistic – can spark change and development.</p>

Handout 1

The Centre of the Universe

EXTRACT FROM CHAPTER 1

FRIDAY

There are two things you can see clearly from my window right now. One is the sky. A huge dark blue sky. And the other is London. Not all of it. Just bits of it. Bits like the Dome. Or the skyscrapers around Docklands. Or this one weird tower that they light up at night, which just sits there – all bright and white, on the top of a hill.

For years I had no idea what this tower was. All I knew was, even on a mucky, cloudy night you could see it, like someone had drawn it on your window with Tipp-Ex.

And then one day I found myself standing right next to that tower. I hadn't meant to. I was up on a hill, miles from home, trying to spot where I lived in the distance. I could see all of London. Well, not all of it. Just bits of it. Bits like the Dome. Or the skyscrapers around Docklands. But I couldn't see that one weird tower, far away. That weird tower they light up at night. The one that just sits there, all bright and white, on top of a hill.

And that was when I looked around.

continued →

It turns out I am in Greenwich. Well I say 'turns out, I *know* I am in Greenwich, to be honest. I've gone there on purpose, after all. I've gone there for a number of reasons, in fact. To see a friend. To have a pint. To have a laugh. And now here I am, next to that big tower, with a sign on it that I can now read for the very first time. The Royal Observatory. Home to the seventh largest telescope in the world, pointed at deep space. And home also of one of the most famous lines in the world. The line which divides the planet into east and west. The line that tells you you're standing on the very Centre of the Earth.....

The next day, though, something was still playing on my mind. The photo of me crouching over the Centre of the Earth had become my computer desktop. I started to wonder how many other people had done something similar with theirs. I googled for images. I found dozens of pictures just like mine... It got me thinking about my nearly deep moment of the night before. My deep moment when I'd considered life, the universe and everything. The Centre of the Earth is nothing compared to the Centre of the Universe....So I googled for images of the Centre of the Universe...but all I found were diagrams, pictures of stars, control rooms, and men with beards pointing at blackboards.

And then I found a sentence that made me realise that googling for images might not quite work: 'Scientists argue that the universe is actually expanding'.

Handout 2

I Love Football

EXTRACT FROM CHAPTER 2

THE FIRST REAL game I ever went to was at Ibrox in Glasgow to watch Rangers. When I was about eight or nine, I was taken by an uncle. He had no interest in football, but he took me as a birthday treat. That was good of him.

I was born in Renfrewshire, not far from Glasgow, and both my parents were Scottish. My father came from Cambuslang and my mother from Motherwell. I did once go and watch Motherwell play, at Fir Park. I went with some other boys, pushing our way to the front, crawling between legs, or being lifted over heads by friendly men.

Then for a while we lived in Dumfries. This was during the war and my father was working at an RAF maintenance station. The local team was Queen of the South. My hero became Billy Houliston, a bullet-headed centre forward who played for Queen of the South – and Scotland. He is long forgotten now, even by Scottish people. It was very rare for a Queen of the South player to be a current Scottish international. I don't think it's happened since.

By the time I was eleven, we had moved to Carlisle, which I look upon as my home town. That's where I really grew up, and where I still have relations. It's just over the border in England, but I remained passionate about Scottish football. Oh, the agonies I went through as a little boy, listening intently to the radio to hear the annual Scotland–England game. I desperately wanted Scotland to win, not only because I supported them, but also because I could boast next day in the school playground.

continued →

But once in Carlisle, I naturally began to take an interest in Carlisle United. I didn't actually go to games regularly as a boy. I couldn't afford it and my father was an invalid. Being Scottish my family was not interested in Carlisle United anyway. But when Carlisle became my adopted home town, United became my adopted team. I did go to one of Carlisle's biggest games in my childhood. This was in 1951 when Carlisle played Arsenal at home. It was the third round of the FA Cup. Carlisle had managed a goalless draw at Highbury, so the replay was at Brunton Park. All the local schools in the area were given the half-day off because a massive crowd of 20,000 was expected. We got beaten 2-0.

Despite having terrible asthma throughout my childhood, and being small and weedy, I spent almost every spare minute playing football. I got it into my head that I wanted to be a professional footballer, if I ever grew up, which seemed unlikely. I practised for hours in the back garden or against a wall, teaching myself to return a ball with either foot. If I was going to be a pro, as I told myself, I needed to be two-footed. We mostly played in the streets on our council estate, under the street lights when it got dark. They were often massive games, with twenty a side. There were hardly any cars in the 1950s, not on our estate. You very rarely had to stop the game to let any traffic through. And then it was usually the coal cart or the milk float, both pulled by horses.

My first job in life was in Manchester, as a graduate trainee reporter on the old *Evening Chronicle*. One day, when Manchester United were playing Manchester City, I was told by the news editor that I was being sent to Old Trafford to cover the game. I was terribly excited. It turned out I was to cover it from *outside* the ground, write a piece on the crowds and the atmosphere. I never did get inside to see the game. Being a proper football reporter was a dream job. Just imagine writing about City or United, reporting their games from the lofty position of the press box, getting a free programme and free Bovril at half time. It was a job almost every Manchester journalist envied. At least I did.

Further development

The two texts used here are non-fiction, but the theme of private passions could also be widely used with fiction titles. The theme gives opportunities to explore characters' motivation, its effect on plot development and how readers are successfully drawn into the characters' passions.

Useful websites

www.join-me.co.uk – tells the story of how Danny Wallace started a cult by accident

www.wallace-id.com –the town of Wallace website

www.rog.nmm.ac.uk –The Royal Observatory,Greenwich

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/business/3054748.stm> – 'I turned my hobby into a business' interviews with two women who turned their hobbies into businesses, plus short articles written by people who turned their love of animals, video games and other things into businesses

www.yorkshiretoday.co.uk/ViewArticle2.aspx?SectionID=4096&ArticleID=1405202
On the Spot/my passion articles

Links to individual author websites can be found with the author biographies in the file 'Further Approaches to Reading for Pleasure', and with the individual book files for the relevant March Quick Reads.

Other Quick Reads with a 'Private Passions' theme:

Title

How to Change Your Life in 7 Steps
Screw It, Let's Do It
Winner Takes All

Author

John Bird
 Richard Branson
 John Francome

Other books with a 'Private Passions' theme from the First Choice database:

March title

Billy Elliot
1000 Inventions and Discoveries
Hot Love
Somebody Someday
Bushcraft
So You Think You Know TV Soaps?
Handy Andy's Weekend Workbook

Author

Melvin Burgess
 Roger Bridgman
 Tracey Cox
 Robbie Williams
 Ray Mears
 Clive Gifford
 Andy Kane

ISBN

1903434335
 0751339288
 0552149551
 009188473X
 0340825162
 0340878703
 0563551682



More reading – Quick Reads

March title

The Thief

Woman Walks into a Bar

Blackwater

Star Sullivan

Hell Island

The Book Boy

Don't Make Me Laugh

Someone Like Me

Screw It, Let's Do It

How to Change Your Life in 7 Steps

Chickenfeed

The Team

Author

Ruth Rendell

Rowan Coleman

Conn Iggulden

Maeve Binchy

Matthew Reilly

Joanna Trollope

Patrick Augustus

Tom Holt

Richard Branson

John Bird

Minette Walters

Mick Dennis with
the Premier League

ISBN

0091796865

0099492288

0091907039

0752879545

0330442325

0747582114

1902934466

1841494461

0753510995

0091907039

0330440314

0552153729

May title

**Danny Wallace and the
Centre of the Universe**

Desert Claw

Cleanskin

The Name You Once Gave Me

Grey Man

I Am a Dalek

The Poison in the Blood

I Love Football

Winner Takes All

The Dying Wish

Secrets

The Corpse's Tale

Author

Danny Wallace

Damien Lewis

Val McDermid

Mike Phillips

Andy McNab

Gareth Roberts/Dr Who

Tom Holland

Hunter Davies

John Francome

Courtia Newland

Lynne Barrett-Lee

Katherine John

ISBN

0091908949

0099493535

0007216726

0007216718

0552154334

0563486481

0349119643

0755314700

0755329481

0349119635

1905170300

1905170319

See www.quickreads.org.uk for information on these and future Quick Reads. **£1-off Quick Reads book tokens**, valid from 2 March-31 December 2006, are available here. The books are available everywhere; high-street bookstores, independent bookshops, supermarkets, libraries and more. You can also search for your nearest *Quick Reads* selling store on a [Store Finder Database](#).

Audio versions of the Quick Reads are available from W F Howes Ltd as part of their Clipper Emergent Reader programmes (www.wfhowes.co.uk/cerp/).

See First Choice library booklist at www.firstchoicebooks.org.uk for mainstream books selected against criteria for their suitability for emergent readers.

Other publications for emergent readers include those from Sandstone Press (www.sandstonepress.com) and New Island's Open Door series (www.newisland.ie).

Adult Literacy Core Curriculum References

Activity 1

Activity, Reflection and Development

Reading

RtL1.1-.5

Speaking and Listening

SLlr/L1.1-.6

SLc/E3.1-.3

SLc/L1.4

SLd/E3.1-.3

Writing

Wt/E3.1-.4