

# the reading agency

## Update no. 2

**From:** Reading Agency  
**Sent:** 09 December 2008 10:19  
**Subject:** Six Book Challenge Update No. 2

Dear Colleagues

Welcome to the second email update for organisations that have purchased materials to run the Six Book Challenge 2009. This is being sent to all contacts we have been given but please be sure to pass it on to ALL staff and partner organisations who will be involved in running the Challenge with you. Anyone wishing to be added to this list should send their full details (name, job title, organization, email and tel number) to [resources@readingagency.org.uk](mailto:resources@readingagency.org.uk) in order to receive future updates direct from The Reading Agency. We're really keen that everyone involved is kept up to date with the guidance we can provide.

### **New website**

Please take a look at our new website for the Six Book Challenge 2009 at [www.sixbookchallenge.org.uk](http://www.sixbookchallenge.org.uk). Our aim is to use this to promote the Challenge and to share news, ideas and stories both from participants and organisations running the Challenge around the UK. We've been able to use some great quotes from people running and taking part in the Challenge. Please send in your own stories if you would like to be featured. And let us know what else you would like to see on the site.

### **'Hidden' page for guidance and templates**

We hope that by now you will have met with any organisations you plan to work with to run the Challenge and planned how you will launch the scheme to your chosen target audience. You will find a range of downloadable guidance and templates on the 'hidden' page for Challenge purchasers at <http://www.readingagency.org.uk/adults/six-book-challenge-resources/>. Please make sure that everyone involved is aware of these resources. We'll also archive these email updates on this 'hidden' page – so you'll find Update No. 1 there if you missed it.

### **Take-up for 2009**

We're delighted to report that more than 200 organisations have signed up to run the Six Book Challenge in 2009 – a great mix of libraries, colleges, adult & community education, prisons and workplaces, among them several organizations who are getting involved for the first time. There's still time for more to join in so please pass on information about the Challenge to more potential partners and signpost them to [www.readingagency.org.uk/shop](http://www.readingagency.org.uk/shop) if they want to buy materials or incentives.

We've got particularly strong interest from union learning reps wanting to try out the Challenge in their workplaces. This builds on the great success of the continuing Vital Link in the workplace project in Yorkshire which is now attracting interest nationwide. Please contact our project manager David Kendall at [mail@davidkendall.co.uk](mailto:mail@davidkendall.co.uk) if you'd like to contact unionlearn in your area.

And we're using the Challenge as a catalyst for new emergent reader group activity in the West Midlands with a range of audiences including employees, young mums, ESOL, those with mental health issues and young offenders as well as Skills for Life learners. Please do send us news of your own reading groups for emergent readers so we can chart the growth of these groups across the country.

### **Sharing experiences**

You'll see we've shared some case studies on the website but also have lots more examples of how organisations have made the Six Book Challenge work for them. Please do get in touch if you have particular queries so that we can put you in contact with similar organisations. We've all learnt a lot in

the first year of the national Six Book Challenge so the trick now is to make the most of experienced gained.

With this in mind we are thinking of setting up a discussion forum on the Six Book Challenge site so that you can post questions and comments. Would this be useful? Give us your views.

### **Finding the right books**

We are now adding some newly selected titles to the First Choice Books database at [www.firstchoicebooks.org.uk](http://www.firstchoicebooks.org.uk) rather than creating a separate list as this seems the best way of bringing together all suggested books to support the Six Book Challenge. These will mainly be existing mainstream titles that fit the Vital Link stock selection criteria – please see the database for more about this. But don't forget the final order deadline of **Monday 12 January** in order to get your deliveries of the new Quick Reads titles for 5 March World Book Day 2009 – and please think big to meet the demand for Quick Reads from Six Book Challenge participants in colleges, prisons and the workplace. We know they'll be used!

### **Full impact evidence**

We've been highlighting some of the main findings from our qualitative research for the Six Book Challenge over the last few months – 88% of those surveyed felt they gained from the Challenge, 60% said their literacy skills had improved. We're about to publish the full impact report so please keep an eye on the Evaluation page of [www.vitalink.org.uk](http://www.vitalink.org.uk)

### **Launching the Challenge**

Finally, please let us know how you plan to promote and launch the Challenge and do make use of the press template which you can download from <http://www.readingagency.org.uk/adults/six-book-challenge-resources/>. The launch is a great opportunity to bring together key partners (Hertfordshire Libraries are linking West Herts College and inviting Quick Reads author Mick Dennis and Three Counties Radio to their launch on 22 January) and invite Challenge completers from 2008 to talk about what the scheme has meant to them.

Good luck with your planning and do keep in touch. With all good wishes for Christmas and the New Year.

Genevieve

Genevieve Clarke  
National Coordinator, The Vital Link  
The Reading Agency  
Tel: 0871 750 2104  
Mob: 0772 959 7680  
[www.readingagency.org.uk](http://www.readingagency.org.uk)