

# the reading agency

## Update no. 3

**From:** Reading Agency  
**Sent:** 09 January 2009 10:19  
**Subject:** Six Book Challenge Update No. 3

Dear Colleagues

Firstly, warm wishes for a very Happy New Year and the start of the Six Book Challenge 2009 in association with Costa!

This is the third email update for organisations that have purchased materials to run the Six Book Challenge 2009. We're sending it 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.

### **Launching the Six Book Challenge**

We hope that you've now got plans in place to launch the Challenge with partner organisations. This may take the form of a special session with Challenge participants in a library, college or learning centre. It may be a chance to invite in the local media and ask previous Challenge completers to share their stories. Or you may have plans to start a new reading group using the Challenge as a catalyst.

It was great to get local press coverage for the launch of the Challenge last year so please do alert us to any stories or send them in to us. Meanwhile we're pleased to report that there's a very personal story from a Six Book Challenge completer in the current issue of the NSPCC's Your Family magazine which reaches just under 400,000 parents free via Early Learning Centres and other outlets.

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

Please remember to look at <http://www.readingagency.org.uk/adults/six-book-challenge-resources/> for a full range of downloadable guidance and templates, including a press release template. Make sure that everyone involved is aware of these resources. We'll also archive these email updates on this 'hidden' page in case you missed them.

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

Involvement in this year's Challenge is looking good. The library sign-up has now exceeded last year's with 149 services taking part across the UK (71%) and more expected to join in. We're particularly pleased to welcome on board a large number of workplaces in both Yorkshire and the North West through the support of unionlearn. And take-up from colleges, adult education and prisons continues to grow.

Sign-up for materials does not tell us the whole story, however, as we know that you are setting up a huge range of partnerships to run the Challenge. Doncaster Libraries are working with a BME Tenants & Residents Association, Birmingham Libraries are linking with REMPLOY and several libraries are working with ESOL groups and family learning. As last year, we will ask you to fill in a short survey in February so that we can get an idea of the scale of people and organisations involved this year.

### **Use our impact evaluation forms**

You'll find some headlines and a link to the full impact report on the Six Book Challenge 2008 on the News pages at [www.sixbookchallenge.org.uk](http://www.sixbookchallenge.org.uk) We know that many of you will be setting up your own evaluation for this year's Challenge but please encourage your participants to fill in our pre- and post-Challenge

surveys so that we can collect as much qualitative data as possible. We have radically simplified the forms in response to feedback and we can supply printable versions if required. Please find the surveys, including a post-Challenge survey for tutors, as follows:

[SBC09 Pre-Challenge survey for participants](#)

[SBC09 Post-Challenge survey for participants](#)

[SBC09 Post-Challenge survey for tutors](#)

We will also be setting up a quantitative survey so please be sure to keep records of numbers of participants, age, gender, ethnic background, and the progress they make, using the templates we have provided.

### **Planning ahead**

Please use the **Six Book Challenge 2009 key dates planner** to shape the course of the Six Book Challenge with your participants. We hope you'll be using World Book Day on 5 March and Adult Learners' Week from 9 – 15 May as key points to spur people on and celebrate their achievements. Through The Reading Agency's Reading Partners programme with major UK publishers we are able to set up a small number of events in libraries with Quick Reads authors so library staff should look out for invitations to pitch for these from my colleague Sandeep Mahal.

### **Support from Costa**

We're delighted that Costa are continuing to sponsor the Challenge in 2009 and are really grateful for their support and enthusiasm for the scheme. Once again they're offering a fabulous national prize draw for all completers within the main target audience for the Six Book Challenge. The prize, for the winner and a guest, includes two tickets to a West End show, overnight accommodation at a London hotel, travel expenses and spending money of £150. Please see <http://www.sixbookchallenge.org.uk/features/winning-the-costa-prize/> for a story about last year's winner Emma Lowther. There is also a separate prize draw for prisons and YOIs - two sets of the shortlisted titles for the Costa Book Awards for the prison library. As in 2008, we leave it to the discretion of the prison involved to arrange how the offender(s) concerned will benefit as best suits their regime.

Some of you will know that Costa provided us with 28,000 free coffee cards as incentives for the Six Book Challenge 2008 but that this an incredibly generous incentive turned out not to be entirely appropriate for all Challenge participants. Instead you will have seen that The Reading Agency is offering incentives for purchase this year – key rings, pens and mugs with Six Book Challenge branding – to help you support the Challenge. However, Costa are keen to see the development of more partnerships with their stores at local level, so please get in touch with us if you would like to be put in contact with a store near you.

And please note that on any printed materials the Challenge should be referred to as 'The Six Book Challenge in association with Costa'. Please email [resources@readingagency.org.uk](mailto:resources@readingagency.org.uk) if you need the Costa logo.

### **Order your Quick Reads NOW – and lots of them!**

If you want copies of the new Quick Reads titles by World Book Day, please be sure to order them by **as soon as possible!** Libraries in particular need to make this order by Monday 12 January in order to get the books in time. Other organisations should refer to the list of wholesalers and publishers at [http://www.niace.org.uk/quickreads/user/store\\_search.asp](http://www.niace.org.uk/quickreads/user/store_search.asp) And please buy plenty of sets so that you can use them with reading groups and literacy classes.

### **Nominate a Challenge completer ...**

The deadline for receipt of nominations for Adult Learners' Week Awards is Wednesday 21 January. Have you thought of nominating any of your Challenge completers from 2008? See <http://www.niace.org.uk/ALW/nominations/default.htm> for more details.

### **A national reading group network for new adult readers**

New mapping data released in 2008 by The Reading Agency revealed that the number of reading groups in England and Wales linked to libraries has more than doubled to around 10,000 in the last four years. It also showed that there is a growing number of reading groups for adult literacy learners. We are now planning to develop a new network called Chatabout for those running reading group activity with adults who are just getting into reading. This will build on work we are currently doing in the West Midlands to support new reading groups with a range of partners which is funded by the Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills. Please do get in touch if you are already running a reading group of this kind as we're keen to hear about the support you need. And watch this space for developments!

Finally, good luck with the Challenge and do get in contact if you have any questions or news to tell us about. We're keen to share your ideas and reports on the website at [www.sixbookchallenge.org.uk](http://www.sixbookchallenge.org.uk)

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