

the reading agency

Update no. 6

From: Reading Agency

Sent: 27 April 2009 10:19

Subject: Six Book Challenge Update No. 6

Dear Colleagues

Welcome to the email update No. 6 for this year's Six Book Challenge. With the new Quick Reads available, Adult Learners' Week round the corner (9 - 15 May) and the Costa prize draw deadline of Tuesday 30 June looming ever closer, we trust the Challenge is in full swing. We've received our first entries for the prize draw and we know that the celebrations have begun for those who have completed the Challenge already.

PLEASE make sure you are passing this email update on to all those involved – we get worried when have plaintive enquiries from people not knowing where to find prize entry forms etc. All this information, plus previous email updates, is at <http://www.readingagency.org.uk/adults/six-book-challenge-resources/>

Shortlist for Libraries Change Lives Award 2009

First we have some good news to report. The Six Book Challenge has been chosen as one of the three finalists in this year's Libraries Change Lives Award run by CILIP (Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals). This is a real accolade for the scheme and the way in which libraries around the country have taken it forward. See more at <http://www.sixbookchallenge.org.uk/news/challenge-shortlisted-for-libr/> and the CILIP website at <http://www.cilip.org.uk/aboutcilip/medalsandawards/LibrariesChangeLives/lclafinalisto9.htm> to see information about the award and the other finalists.

Particular thanks go to the library services who provided case studies for the Six Book Challenge application – Staffordshire, West Sussex, Warrington, Sheffield, Renfrewshire and the former Western Education and Library Board in Northern Ireland. It was wonderful to be able to include real-life testimonies from individuals who completed the Six Book Challenge in 2008. The prison library at HMP YO1 Brinsford in Staffordshire is kindly hosting a visit from the judges and Warrington Libraries will be taking part in a film of the project together with their learning provider partner Priestly College. The winner will be announced by Poet Laureate and Chair of the Museums Libraries and Archives Council, Andrew Motion on 15 July at Umbrella 2009 to be held at the DeHavilland Campus of the University of Hertfordshire in Hatfield.

Quick Reads Learners' Favourite Award 2009

And another award – this time an invitation for Six Book Challenge participants to vote for their favourite Quick Read of 2009. They should vote by Friday 1 May at <http://www.niace.org.uk/quickreads/user/poll.php> and they could win a selection of Quick Reads books if they do. The Quick Reads Learners' Favourite Award 2008 was won by Adele Parks, author of Happy Families for the Quick Reads initiative. This year's winner will be announced at a Quick Reads event on Wednesday 13 May.

Have your say on plans for Six Book Challenge 2010

We've started planning for the 2010 Six Book Challenge with the aim of launching a new design for next year in early July. We would really like your help in refining the scheme and the materials we offer to organisers and participants so that you have exactly what you need to run the Challenge effectively. Please tell us what you think by responding to a short survey at [Six Book Challenge 2010 materials survey](#)

by **Friday 8 May** at the latest – it'll only take a few minutes. **All those replying by this date will be entered in a draw for Six Book Challenge mugs and other freebies.**

Celebrating the Challenge

Several organisations are using Adult Learners' Week to hold award ceremonies or to spur people on to complete the Six Book Challenge. Learning at Work Day on Thursday 14 May is a key date and we know that some workplaces will be launching the Challenge that day. Please tell us our plans so we can feature you on the website.

We're getting some great stories – most recently from Bath Library about a visit by Culverhay Readers, a group improving their skills on an intensive six-week course, and from Brixton Skills Training UK about their visit to Balham Library with Challenge participants reading a mix of English and bilingual books. Some impressive figures too with many organisations saying that they are finding it easier to get tutors and learners involved this year – Sue Rossiter in North Somerset is working with five groups rather than two, Janet Puzyllo in Warrington has extended the Challenge to ESOL learners and a group of 16-18 year olds, and Fletchers Bakeries in Sheffield have signed up nearly 100 people this year in an effort to double their figures. Keep the news coming!

Here's a comment from Brenda Shaw, a cleaner taking part in the Six Book Challenge at Corus steelworks in Scunthorpe supported by North Lincolnshire Libraries: "It's got us all back into reading. I hadn't read a book for a long time, and through this I've joined the local library. We did it last year, and quite enjoyed it and so we wanted to see what it would be about this year. We don't have much time but we do tell each other about the different books. This is the first time I've done anything like this. I was a bit reluctant to start but now I can't wait for each book. I like love stories, and murder stories, I find it relaxing to be honest."

And just in from Patricia Nolan our Six Book Challenger with Kilkenny Libraries in Ireland, from an article she's written for the Kilkenny adult literacy organization Word Aid:

"I never picked up a book before and never had a notion of it. Now, with the help of my tutor, I'm able to make out new words myself and understand them. I'm on my third book since starting in January and the first book I read I had a good laugh all the way through." Family man

"It's a good idea. I never read a book before but with Word Aid's help I actually picked up the book and got started. Now I'm on my third book since January." Young working mother

Evaluating the impact

We all need this kind of evidence so please encourage your Challenge completers to use our evaluation forms.

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

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

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

And take note of the data we will need ...

The final evaluation surveys for submission by 30 June 2009 are now available so please have a look and make sure that you are keeping records of numbers of participants, age, gender, ethnic background, and the progress they make, using the templates we have provided. There are four surveys as follows:

[Public libraries 2009 SBC Evaluation](#)

[Prisons and YOIs 2009 SBC Evaluation](#)

[Learning providers 2009 SBC Evaluation](#) (ie colleges, adult education organisations, schools and other providers)

[Workplaces 2009 SBC Evaluation](#)

And finally

We've been talking to NIACE about some pilot work they are doing around media clubs - see <http://www.niace.org.uk/tunein> for more information. We're particularly keen for libraries to try out this idea – it could be a great way of engaging non-readers or of working with an existing group which meets in the library but isn't currently focused on any particular activity. So please contact us if you'd like to get involved.

All good wishes – and please keep in touch.

Genevieve

Launching the new Quick Reads on World Book Day

World Book Day on 5 March is fast approaching so we hope you have plans to use this as a staging post for people doing the Challenge and to draw their attention to the ten new Quick Read titles. Libraries who ordered free Quick Reads materials should be receiving them shortly and the books should also be coming through from suppliers – please chase if they don't appear or order NOW if you haven't already! Other organisations wanting to order promotional materials can do so at www.quickreads.org.uk where you will also find information about book suppliers and wholesalers. And remember that you'll need multiple copies of the Quick Reads if you are using them for the Challenge and for reading group activity.

Help us identify more books for emergent readers!

We also hope that you're using the searchable database at www.firstchoicebooks.org.uk to find more titles to use for the Six Book Challenge. We've recently added more titles which have been submitted by publishers working with The Reading Agency through our Reading Partners scheme. Now we'd like to invite library staff and tutors running the Challenge to work with us to feed through books that you find are particularly popular with participants. **Please get in touch if you would like to be involved in this process.**

A national reading group network for new adult readers

Finally we've now made our announcement about Chatabout – see <http://www.readingagency.org.uk/media/press-releases/> - so please let us know if you are running a reading group with new readers.

All good wishes with the Six Book Challenge – and keep in touch with your news.

Genevieve

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