



How schools can benefit from the Summer Reading Challenge (SRC)¹

“The Challenge clearly has a positive impact on children’s reading progress during the break from school, helping them to become independent, discriminating readers” Fiona Collins and Judith Graham, Department of Education, University of Surrey, Roehampton

- 90% of all UK library authorities host the Summer Reading Challenge
- 600,000 children take part in around 3600 libraries
- 35,000 children become new library members to take part
- The Challenge is accessible to every child.

The Summer Reading Challenge...

...keeps children reading during the summer and encourages more reading:

- 1 in 6 read their SRC books and nothing else during the school holiday
- for 2 in 3, SRC books comprised at least half their reading over the summer
- 66% said they read more books because of the challenge
- 95% wanted to read lots more books
- 98% liked choosing for themselves

...develops children’s reading skills

- more than 75% of participants say the SRC made a big difference to their reading
- 4 out of 10 thought they read ‘a lot better’ as a result

...encourages reading enjoyment

- 96% like reading the books
- 84% enjoyed taking part in the challenge ‘a lot’
- 76% liked reading ‘a lot’

Reading enjoyment is critical to young people’s life chances, as shown by the recent Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development research in their 2002 study ‘Reading for Change’. This found that a love of reading is more important for children’s educational success than their family’s wealth or class. Children from deprived backgrounds do better in tests than those from more affluent homes if they enjoy reading books, newspapers and comics in their spare time¹

...broadens reading horizons

- introduces new reading experiences
 - 92% of books read as part of the challenge were new to the reader
 - 66% were by an author new to the reader
- encourages experimentation
 - 45% read a book they wouldn’t have wanted to read before
 - 90% liked reading all different types of books
 - 21% say they don’t just read books of their favourite type
- generates new connections
 - as a result of the challenge, 40% of children found a new favourite book
 - and 1 in 8 discovered a new favourite author

¹ available via the DfES website www.dfes.gov.uk



The Summer Reading Challenge (SRC)²...

...instils confidence

- 66% considered themselves 'excellent' or 'very good' at reading after the reading challenge
- 78% believe their reading has improved as a result of taking part
- 68% have the confidence to recommend a book they like to their friends

...gets children talking and writing about books

- 63% liked writing about the books
- 65% tell their friends to read a book they've enjoyed.

...stimulates creative activity

- 68% liked to draw or play games about a book with friends or on their own
- 63% say they think about a book after reading it

...inspires and rewards children's reading

- 81% liked getting the medal
- 89% liked collecting the stickers

...encourages library membership and promotes positive feelings about the library

- 12% joined the library to take part
- 99% liked going to the library
- 77% think "the librarian likes talking to me about my books"
- 99% are keen to go on using the library
- 97% want to do the SRC again next year
- 71% felt it was easier to find books they want to read after doing the Challenge
- 98% like "choosing the books myself"

...helps children to find out more about themselves and the world around them

- 59% found something in a book that they didn't know before
- 63% read a book about people with different lives from them
- 30% read a book about someone just like them

The Summer Reading Challenge web-site – www.readingrollercoaster.org.uk³ gives children the chance to find out about authors and illustrators and discover what inspires them to write and draw. The web-site:

- enables children to make connections between authors and their own creativity
- inspires children to read more
- leaves children buzzing with their own creative ideas
- is so much fun that children recommend it to friends and family
- encourages the children to read books by the featured authors

² All evidence is from *Inspiring Children* at www.readingagency.org.uk/html/research_downloads.cfm

³ www.readingrollercoaster.org.uk for 2004 challenge