

# the reading agency

## groupthing key messages

### What is groupthing?

groupthing is an online community where young people creatively engage with reading and words. It's a major new initiative from The Reading Agency, who own, manage and develop it with young people.

**groupthing** harnesses the power of Web 2.0 technology to create an online environment where young people can meet to create and share ideas through the medium of words. It's open to all young people interested in self-expression, communication, collaboration and the exploration of ideas through words. It is based on interest groups and is user driven.

**groupthing** is also a tool for professionals working with young people. It helps them engage young people in positive, creative activities based on words, and through a hidden part of the site, share ideas with one another.

**groupthing** is working with the RNIB to ensure that the site is accessible and that blind and partially sighted young people can join their sighted peers.

### Who is it for?

- Young people aged 13 up to 18 who consider themselves readers (of magazines, manga, poetry, journalism, fiction, non-fiction, drama) and those who don't – but who are interested in song lyrics, games, film, TV scripts and 'how-to' manuals.
- Professionals working with young people who can use the site as a tool for engaging young people in positive, creative word-based activities using a medium that is more natural to many young people than books. **groupthing** can be used by, and can connect, professionals from education, the public sector and creative industries.

### What difference is The Reading Agency trying to make?

The Reading Agency works to get more people reading more. We're trying to get more young people reading more because it's so crucial for their life chances. To do that we need to redefine reading so that more young people recognise themselves as readers and are empowered by that realisation.

**groupthing** gives the public sector and its partners a new online tool to hook young people into words and reading – where young people can take an active role in debate, try out their ideas, be creative and make decisions.

**groupthing** helps the public sector create and share good practice with Web 2.0 technology and fosters partnerships between disciplines working with young people.



### **How will it work?**

- **groupthing** gives young people already keen on books a ready made community, but it's also much broader.
- It offers a place where young people can explore their own and others' creativity with words through shared interests.
- Our partnerships strategy means we can reach young people with a passion, whether that's fishing or hip hop, and bring them to the site to spark their interest in reading.
- Subscribers can use it with disengaged young people, tapping into their creativity with words.

### **Why is it different from anything else on the market?**

- **groupthing** works with content partners – from publishers to creative arts organizations. Index on Censorship to the National Youth Agency, the RNIB to Reading Connects – to provide editorial that grabs young people's attention.
- **groupthing** is dedicated to young people's creativity with words and sets out to redefine what reading's all about – yes books, but also lyrics, blogs, websites, manga, storytelling, performance poetry, journalism, film scripts and games.
- **groupthing** links reading to success in life by connecting young people to adults making their living from words – for creative tips and career inspiration.
- **groupthing** uses the public sector's grassroots contact with young people in real local communities to generate user driven interaction, interest and debate.

### **For more information:**

Contact: [info@groupthing.org](mailto:info@groupthing.org)

or go to: [www.readingagency.org.uk](http://www.readingagency.org.uk)

October 2008