

the reading agency

groupthing: IT information

What is groupthing?

groupthing.org is a new networking website for young people based on reading and words. They can post their own writing, read other young people's work and get advice from professionals. It is a major new initiative from The Reading Agency who are developing it with young people.

groupthing is available by subscription to libraries, schools, youth groups and anybody working with young people aged 13 up to 18.

What are the benefits of using groupthing?

groupthing is safe, accessible and easy to use. Through groupthing, librarians, teachers and youth workers can get advice and support from other professionals, take part in debates, get young people involved in creating content and entering competitions, and find out about offers like author events, promotions and free stuff. They can also promote events and activities to young people.

groupthing supports the creative curriculum and the development of positive activities for young people around reading for pleasure and developing the reading habit. It supports young people's participation and empowerment and provides opportunities for consultation and the development of volunteering roles. Being part of groupthing can help young people with their self esteem, confidence, motivation and skills acquisition.

groupthing's:

House Rules

http://groupthing.org/house_rules

Terms and Conditions

<http://groupthing.org/terms>

Privacy Policy

<http://groupthing.org/privacy>

Safety information

<http://groupthing.org/safety>

Safety on groupthing:

Young people's content on groupthing is moderated by Tempero (www.tempero.co.uk).

Tempero's clients include: CBBC, E4, Sugar and 4 Music amongst others. Tempero's moderators are CRB checked and the moderation system is operated through a closed and secure network.

Tempero work to groupthing's moderation guidelines and escalation policy which are reviewed on a regular basis. groupthing has in place house rules, terms and conditions, a privacy policy and safety advice which support both the moderation guidelines and escalation policy.

groupthing will be risk assessed by the NSPCC.

groupthing's launch moderation hours are between 10am – 10pm each day. The expected turnaround of content is 1 hour, except content which is posted after 8pm which may be looked at the following day. The moderation hours will be reviewed on a regular basis as we learn more



groupthing
where creative things meet

read
readingagency.org.uk

about how and when the site is being used. The groupthing team act as community developers on the site and as such have a daily overview of site and membership activity.

The following levels of moderation are in operation on the site:

- **Filtering:** words which are on the groupthing profanity filter (swear words, racist, sexist, homophobic etc) are automatically removed from any text and replaced by 'xxx'. Any post to which this happens is sent as high priority to the moderators.
- **Profiles:** all profiles are checked as high priority by the moderators to ensure that no personal details are visible and that profile avatars are appropriate.
- **Report it:** all posts have 'report it' next to them, so that users can report inappropriate content posted by their peers. All reported posts are sent as high priority to the moderators.
- **All posts,** text, audio, images and video are looked at by the moderators. In the case of audio and video content these are checked twice.
- **All links** are checked by the moderators as being valid and appropriate and no links are allowed to personal pages on social networking sites.

Young people on groupthing:

Young people aged between 13 upto 18 can sign up for free to groupthing and by doing so agree to abide by the site's House Rules and Terms and Conditions. Young people are known by nicknames on the site and direct messaging on an individual basis cannot take place. Creative content put up by young people onto groupthing is done by upload and not via linking to third party sites.

Professional users on groupthing:

Professional users on groupthing are from organisations (libraries, schools, youth groups, publishers, arts/literature organisations) that have subscribed to the site. Under groupthing's Terms and Conditions, all professional users are required to be CRB checked. Professional users on groupthing are known by their real name and job title ie: their role and purpose for being on groupthing is apparent to young people using the site.

You can download groupthing's Terms and Conditions at:

www.readingagency.org.uk/young/groupthing

Site specification:

Website address: www.groupthing.org
Port number: general internet Port 80

Minimum operating system and browser requirements:

groupthing doesn't have a minimum operating system. It will run on most modern operating systems (i.e.: XP, Vista/OSX, Linux).

But the site does have a minim browser requirement:

PC:

Internet Explorer 6 or 7 (or better)

www.microsoft.com/windows/downloads/ie/getitnow.msp

PC and Mac:

Mozilla Firefox 3 (or better) www.mozilla.com/firefox/ *(recommended)*
Safari 3 (or better) www.apple.com/safari/
Opera 9.6 (or better) www.opera.com/

Flash:

To play the audio and video content on the site Adobe Flash player 9 is required. You can download it at: www.adobe.com/products/flashplayer/

Accessibility:

The Reading Agency is working in partnership with the RNIB (www.rnib.org.uk/library) to ensure that groupthing is accessible to visually impaired young people.

All text on groupthing can be resized using standard browser controls. You are welcome to use your own custom CSS style sheet via your web browser. Our site uses a fixed width to ensure control of the line length and legibility. If you have any questions regarding these issues please do contact us.

Markup: our website is valid XHTML 1.0 strict, using the W3C validation service. All layout and formatting is controlled by CSS, and has been validated using the W3C validation service.

External sites on the groupthing blogs:

The following websites are currently used by groupthing to provide specific functionality on the site blogs. All of the blogs on groupthing are managed, edited and uploaded by the groupthing team (who are admins of the site). No membership of these sites is required by either young people or professional users of groupthing to access the content presented on the groupthing blogs.

Flickr: www.flickr.com

What is it? An online photo management and sharing application.

Why do we use it? We use Flickr to manage and embed the images on the groupthing blogs. groupthing's Flickr page: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/29377613@Nos/>

Imeem: www.imeem.com

What is it? A social network that enables users to discover, interact and express themselves with media, including music, video and photos, and form connections based on shared tastes and interests.

Why do we use it? We use imeem to manage and embed the audio files (podcasts) on the groupthing blogs.

Scribd: www.scribd.com

What is it? A website where documents are uploaded, promoted and shared online.

Why do we use it? We use Scribd to manage and embed documents (for eg: sneaks, resources) on the groupthing blogs.

Slide: www.slide.com

What is it? A publisher of social entertainment applications.

Why do we use it? We use Slide to create photo slideshows on the groupthing blogs.

Youtube: www.youtube.com

What is it? An online video community, where originally created videos can be watched and shared.

Why do we use it? We use Youtube to manage and embed videos on the groupthing blogs. groupthing's YouTube page: www.youtube.com/groupthingvid

Other applications groupthing uses:**Add this** www.addthis.com

What is it? A bookmarking and sharing button.

Why do we use it? So that young people and professionals can email, print or share particular groupthing pages and content.

Amazon web services <https://aws.amazon.com>

What is it? Provides access to the Amazon source code for developers

Why do we use it? To pull down the book, film, music and game data (eg: cover images) to groupthing.

Google analytics www.google.com/analytics

What is it? A site statistics package that gathers non-personal information on visitors and site use.

Why do we use it? We use this information to monitor how our visitors are using groupthing so that we can improve their experience of the site.

Social networking sites and groupthing:

groupthing has set-up pages on the following social networking sites. These pages will be used to spread the word about the groupthing site to young people and professionals.

Myspace www.myspace.com/groupthing

Facebook www.facebook.com

Twitter www.twitter.com/groupthing

www.twitter.com/groupthingpro

Usability and bugs:

groupthing is new! This means that there are likely to be bugs in the system (i.e.: bits of functionality/design that might need a bit of mending/tweaking). Site users can report bugs to the groupthing team as well as provide ideas for new functionality and potential content on the site.

Contact:

For more information: www.readingagency.org.uk/young/groupthing
or email: info@groupthing.org

For help and support email: help@groupthing.org

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