

# the reading agency

“groupthing will give libraries the tools to reach out to the online generation and to work with them on their own terms.” Sharon Kirkpatrick, ASCEL

“It's going to be amazing. With groupthing, and the work already grounded in public libraries, we will be able to tap into young people's passion and creativity for words and narrative in ways we have never been able to before.” Tony Durcan, Newcastle Library Service

## groupthing for HeadSpace authorities

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

**groupthing** gives the public sector and its partners a new tool to hook young people into words and reading. groupthing redefines reading so that more young people recognise themselves as readers, are empowered by that realisation, and start reading more.

**groupthing's audience** is young people aged 13 up to 18 who consider themselves readers and those who don't – but who are interested in words in other contexts.

**groupthing promotes** all forms of reading and words: magazines, non-fiction, manga, graphic novels, adult cross-over titles, plays, scripts, music (lyrics), short stories, film, games, websites, blogs, journalism, fiction, poetry, spoken word and 'how to' manuals.

**groupthing manifesto** is spontaneous, vivid, irresistible, curious, passionate, pushy, lively, tantalizing, inventive, fun, different, informative, irreverent, expressive, diverse, engaged, independent

**groupthing is a safe, easy to use, accessible networking site.** All content is post moderated by Tempero ([www.tempero.co.uk](http://www.tempero.co.uk)) and no personal details are visible. The site will have been risk assessed by the NSPCC. We are working in partnership with the RNIB to ensure the site is accessible for all young people.



**Young people's participation** is driving the site forward at every stage. They told us they wanted a place where they could communicate online, find out about activities locally, be part of virtual groups, create their own content, express and share their creativity.

**As a subscriber you can:**

- Set up any number of exclusive group pages where your young people can showcase their creative work (audio, video, image, text), rate and review, chat about and debate what they are passionate about.
- Create 'closed' (invited members only) or 'open' (anyone can join) group pages.
- Advertise events, put in links to your web pages and catalogues, add a 'group' friend, let people know your news, create polls and use the locator to show where you are.
- Use the site as an outreach tool and for consultation and as online space for your reading, gaming and manga groups, book prizes and festivals.
- Through the part of the site that is only open to professionals you can:
  - be part of an online 24/7 professional community, talking to others from libraries, education, the public sector and creative industries
  - get advance notice of what's coming up on the site - the latest news and offers
  - read our regular columns on manga and graphic novels, games and online (amongst others!)
  - be part of debates about what's affecting young people's engagement with reading, words and creativity
  - get opportunities to engage your young people in creating content and entering competitions
  - access opportunities from the site's content partners like author events, free stuff, focus group testing.

**How can groupthing help to deliver my HeadSpace project?**

HeadSpace is about finding new ways of engaging teenagers, particularly those who are socially excluded, in reading and libraries. HeadSpace listens to what young people want from libraries and provides creative activities and volunteering opportunities to bring young people together to participate in the development, management and delivery of services.

**groupthing** can add depth, inspiration and solutions to all of these challenges.

- **groupthing takes reading further and challenges traditional methods of delivery.** You will be able to reach out to more young people than ever; give your current HeadSpace teenage users an online presence; enable young people to create, market and showcase a creative reading programme for your HeadSpace; consult with and get feedback from young people; provide access to HeadSpace activities 24/7.
- **groupthing can help you to meet your targets.** Every HeadSpace site has targets to meet around the engagement of young people in creative reading activities and volunteering. Through groupthing HeadSpace sites will be able to offer

a whole new range of creative and volunteering activities for young people. Every HeadSpace partner will be able to create their own HeadSpace group page which can be maintained by young people; offering them opportunities to become involved in developing content for the site, uploading images, creating new cover art, storyboarding favorite animations or writing lyrics. Forums open exclusively to HeadSpace young people also enable them to make friends with other volunteers and HeadSpace users across the national network of HeadSpace sites, to share ideas and experiences.

### **How will subscribing to groupthing benefit the rest of my library service?**

- Meet new statutory guidance for local authorities on positive activities and Local Area Agreement targets around volunteering and accreditation for young people aged 13 to 19 (NI 6 and NI 110).
- Contribute to local priorities and targets for literacy by encouraging young people to read for pleasure and develop the reading habit.
- Deliver the national Library Offer to Young People (<http://digbig.com/4wfbby>).
- Strengthen community cohesion – through improving group and inter-group dialogue and understanding (local and central government Shared Priorities 1-7).
- Support young people's mental and emotional health by helping them enjoy life and make a positive contribution (Local Area Agreement Blocks 1-4 and Every Child Matters outcomes).
- Contribute to young people's enjoyment and achievement through increased participation in cultural activities.
- Enrich individual lives, strengthen communities and improve places where people live through culture (Local Area Agreement Blocks 1-4, cross-cutting outcomes).
- Support empowerment, participation, consultation, and volunteering opportunities for young people wherever this needs to happen in your service.

**groupthing** is underpinned by the principles of Fulfilling their Potential, the national libraries change programme for young people. It's also part of The Reading Agency's new modular Participate programme.

### **What's the technical specification?**

**groupthing** does not have a minimum operating system requirement – it will run on most modern operating systems (ie: XP, Vista/OSX, Linux). It does have a minimum browser requirement: Firefox 2 (or better), Safari 3 (or better), Opera 9 (or better) or Internet Explorer 7 (but 6 will work too). To play the audio and video content on the site you will need Flash player 9. The site will have cookies.

### **When can I be part of it?**

- Second release for closed beta testing from November 2008
  - Soft launch January 2009
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### **What does a subscription to groupthing cover?**

- Ability to use the site for all of your work with young people and across any terminal and laptops for outreach work.
- Access to the 'hidden' professional side of the site.
- Unlimited ability to set-up as many group pages as you want.
- If you run a School Library Service, this is included in the subscription rate.

### **Subscription rates HeadSpace authorities**

- Save £100 on any of the standard rates
- HeadSpace Big Lottery Revenue Grants can be used to pay for this subscription.

### **One year subscription deal:**

Public libraries with more than 150 full-time staff: £700 + VAT

**With HeadSpace authority discount save £100: Pay only £600 + VAT**

Public libraries with less than 150 full-time staff: £600 + VAT

**With HeadSpace authority discount save £100: Pay only £500 + VAT**

### **Two year subscription deal:**

Public libraries with more than 150 full-time staff save 10%: pay only £1260 + VAT

**With HeadSpace authority discount save another £100: Pay only £1160 + VAT**

Public libraries with less than 150 full time staff: 2 years save 10%= £1080 + VAT

**With HeadSpace authority discount save another £100: Pay only £980+ VAT**

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### **For more information:**

Contact: [info@groupthing.org](mailto:info@groupthing.org)  
or go to: [www.readingagency.org.uk](http://www.readingagency.org.uk)

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