

# the reading agency

“What a great way for schools to engage their students online with reading in all its forms. groupthing encourages social interaction around reading providing an exciting way for students to chat about and share their reading recommendations.”  
Julia Strong, Deputy Director, National Literacy Trust

## Groupthing for secondary schools and colleges

**groupthing** is an online community where young people creatively engage with reading and words.

**groupthing** gives the education sector and its partners a new engagement 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 (on and off line), 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 safe, easy to use and fully accessible.** 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.

**groupthing** is an initiative owned, managed and developed by The Reading Agency, an independent charity working to bring more reading to more people.

**gr@upthing**  
where creative things meet

**read**  
readingagency.org.uk

**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:**

- Use the site and get access to the professional side of the site 24/7.
- Set up any number of 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, add a 'group' friend, let people know your news, create polls, use the locator.
- Enhance work in the classroom with students online in an active and creative space.
- Use the site: to promote student voice and participation, and as an online space for your groups, projects, book weeks and festivals.
- Through the part of the site that is only open to professionals you can:
  - be part of an online professional community, talking to others from education, libraries, 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 on 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.

**grouping supports:**

- The Secondary Strategy sections 5 (reading – responding to print and multi-modal texts), 8.5 (writing – presenting texts in a variety of forms on paper and screen) and 10.1 (exploring texts using technology).
- The Every Child Matters outcomes and the National Indicators to which they relate, particularly: enjoy and achieve; make a positive contribution and consequently to achieve economic well being later in life.

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## **Creativity and engagement across the curriculum**

**groupthing** provides schools with the tools to ignite students' enthusiasm for words and narrative. It brings together advice, presentation space, and stimulus for all forms of writing and reading. They can use the technology to explore and create a wide variety of texts, and learn from both peer-to-peer comment and content as well as professional advice.

### **Just do it!**

Lots of young people write poetry, diaries, raps, short stories, but never find a way to get it out of their notebooks and in front of an audience. Already this generation is using a huge variety of tools for creating narratives. **groupthing** brings them into one safe space and gives the focus of an audience and professional presentation. They can use their groups to work together and share tips, and join a community of other young people where they can get feedback, support and inspiration.

**groupthing** can be used across the curriculum, inside normal school hours and the extended school as well as for study support and enrichment activities.

### **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 see 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?**

- Permission to use the site across all terminals 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.

**Subscription rates: schools and colleges**

**Early adopter** one year subscription rate until 31 December 2008: £90 + VAT

**One year** subscription rate from 1 January 2009: £100 + VAT

**Two year** subscription deal: (10% off one year subscription rate) £180 + 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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