



## **Celebrating World Book Day: secondary resource**

A guide to World Book Day including whole school and classroom activities

**Suitable for secondary pupils**

**Resource created by Scottish Book Trust and World Book  
Day**

[scottishbooktrust.com](http://scottishbooktrust.com)



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## About this resource

[Scottish Book Trust](#) is a national charity that believes everyone living in Scotland should have equal access to books. Our Schools programmes include book gifting, tours and live events, our [Reading Schools](#) accreditation programme, as well as professional support, training and resources to support you to embed reading for pleasure in your school or setting.

[World Book Day](#) is a national celebration which changes lives through a love of books and reading. They are a national charity that operates in the U.K. and Ireland to promote reading for pleasure, offering every child and young person the opportunity to have a book of their own. World Book Day 2025 is **Thursday 6 March**.

We have partnered with World Book Day to adapt their toolkit and resources for Scottish schools and settings and help you celebrate World Book Day 2025! On [the Scottish Book Trust website](#), you can find all of the resources including:

- A World Book Day planning toolkit
- Celebrating World Book Day: early years resource
- Celebrating World Book Day: primary resource
- Celebrating World Book Day: secondary resource

- Celebrating World Book Day: school library resource
- Celebrating World Book Day: home educator resource

You can also find our [designated World Book Day webpage on the Scottish Book Trust website](#), which gathers activities, articles, videos, and more resources that have been handpicked to help you further explore reading for pleasure and the World Book Day £1 titles!

This resource, created in partnership with World Book Day, contains advice and ideas for celebrating World Book Day in your classes and school. Throughout, we've highlighted Scottish Book Trust resources you can use as part of your celebration, or to deliver further opportunities to read for pleasure. If you need more information on the tokens or practical elements of planning for World Book Day see our [World Book Day planning toolkit](#).

The key areas of this resource are:

- How to create a whole-school plan to celebrate World Book Day
- Suggested activities to celebrate World Book Day
- How to continue to support reading for pleasure in your school, build a reading culture and make reading fun using World Book Day and Scottish Book Trust resources and programmes

## **Why celebrate World Book Day?**

Reading for pleasure is a key indicator of a child's future success. In fact, studies show its more important for a child's educational success than the socio-economic class they grow up in<sup>1</sup>. Reading for pleasure has benefits across the curriculum for a child's skills and learning, as well as their motivation to learn<sup>2</sup>. It also helps develop key life skills such as empathy, imagination, problem-solving and communication skills<sup>3</sup>.

By celebrating days like World Book Day and giving reading for pleasure a high

profile in your school, you are demonstrating to pupils that reading is a fun and worthwhile way to spend their time. By sharing your habits and preferences as a reader, you are also acting as reading role model, which is something that they may not have at home. Throughout this resource, we suggest ways to make reading engaging and fun for all pupils as well as how to extend these ideas in your school beyond World Book Day.

World Book Day has six key principles of reading for pleasure. They believe children are more likely to love reading if:

- Someone reads to them regularly
- They find time to read
- They have books at home and at school
- They know a trusted person who can help them find the right books
- We make reading fun for them
- They are given a choice in what they read

Similarly, Scottish Book Trusts' [Reading Schools](#) accreditation programme is designed to champion your efforts as you build and sustain a reading culture in your school or setting. Our framework, mapped onto [How Good is Our School? 4](#), includes elements that are key to building a reading culture. Many of these key areas support celebrating World Book Day, including role modelling reading to pupils, creating a school environment that encourages and supports reading, and connecting pupils with reading social networks.

By working together to celebrate World Book Day, we can help share the joy of reading and books with more children and their families!

## **Scottish Book Trust packages**

On the Scottish Book Trust website, we've created a [World Book Day page](#) which gathers activities, articles, videos and more resources to help you celebrate World

Book Day. For example, if your pupils have enjoyed *The Wolf Trials*, you can watch [Kiran Milwood Hargrave's Authors Live](#). If they preferred *This Story is a Lie* you can find [our article from writer Kirsty Logan on how to create atmosphere in your writing](#).

If you need book recommendations, you can also find our “What to read after World Book Day” book lists for [beginning and early readers](#) as well as [fluent and independent](#), which suggest books that pupils might like based upon what they have chosen from the World Book Day £1 titles.

## Creating a whole-school plan

### For school leads

#### Key actions

- The [World Book Day planning toolkit](#) gives more information on the tokens and logistics of planning
- Arrange a planning meeting with staff
- Plan World Book Day delivery with staff and pupils
- Communicate activities to families
- Hand out World Book Day £1 book tokens
- See [World Book Day's Caregivers' communication toolkit](#) for more information on how to communicate with families so they're prepared and excited for World Book Day

#### CLPL

To develop staff knowledge, consider attending, or viewing, the following webinars from World Book Day and Scottish Book Trust:

- World Book Day's [Introduction to World Book Day 2025 webinar](#) will be held on Wednesday 15 January at 4pm
- You can also watch [Overcoming Barriers to Reading for Pleasure](#) from World Book Day in partnership with The Open University on the World Book Day website

- On the Scottish Book Trust website you can also find a webinar on [Building a reading culture in your school](#) which shares tips and activities to get your school reading!

### Key things to consider

Throughout your planning consider the following:

- Make sure you find ways for students to respond to what they're reading, including expressing their reading passions or hopes, or books they do or don't like
- Explicitly teach and model core skills, such as choosing and talking about books
- Celebrate all reading! All reading is good reading, including manga, audiobooks, magazines, comics and books marked as younger than a pupil's age
- Focus on how students want to feel, and respond to their reading rather than their book knowledge
- Ask yourself - is this activity helping students read what they want in their spare time?
- Ask yourself - does this activity make room for students who don't currently choose to read? Is it accessible for them?
- Ask yourself – is our delivery and texts representative of the children and young people in our school? Children are more likely to engage with reading when they see characters like them<sup>4</sup>.

### Whole-school activities

#### Day planner

Timings	Activity
Assembly	<b>Assembly</b> Use the editable World Book Day pack, developed with Shapes for Schools to create a World Book Day assembly.

Registration	<p><b>Reading doodles</b> Show students the 2025 poster and invite them to create their own reading-related doodles. Use these as a basis for discussion</p> <p><b>Choosing a book</b> Show students how to access in-school information, as well as <a href="#">BorrowBox</a> and <a href="#">Libby</a> at their local library. You might also want to remind them that books are available online, via apps such as <a href="#">Spotify</a> (please note, this does require a subscription).</p> <p><b>Book jam</b> Staff share 10 second extracts of books they've enjoyed, and students vote for their favourites. Incentivise staff with a prize for winning the vote.</p> <p><b>Quickfire book club</b> Share an article, poem or short extract of a book, and invite students to discuss how they feel about it. Aidan Chambers' structure of Likes, Dislikes, Patterns and Connections might be useful here.</p>
In class	<p><b>Authors Live (<a href="#">page 8</a>)</b> Authors Live brings world-class children's authors and illustrators into your classroom. Our <a href="#">Authors Live on demand broadcasts</a> can be filtered by different subjects. Why not put your pupils in charge of creating a watchlist or screening room with snacks?</p> <p><b>Classroom activities (see <a href="#">page 9</a>)</b> Try our classroom activities, including Reading Mood Boards or Reading Rivers to give children the opportunity to share reading recommendations with each other.</p>
Home time	<p><b>Hand out a £1 book tokens</b> Explain how to redeem the token and where they might find £1 books near them. Use our caregivers' communication toolkit for advice on sharing information with caregivers.</p>

### Activity 1: Assembly

Use the editable World Book Day pack, developed with Shapes for Schools to create a World Book Day assembly.

## Activity 2: Authors Live

You could also start the day by screening an Authors Live broadcast from [Scottish Book Trust's on demand library](#). Why not put pupils in charge of who to watch? If your pupils enjoyed *The Wolf Trials* why not catch up on [Kiran Milwood Hargrave's broadcast](#) where she discusses *The Geomancer Trilogy*. There's plenty of other fantastic authors and illustrators, so you may find a firm favourite, or you can try someone new!

## Activity 3: Book recommendation videos

Do you have budding content creators among your staff or students? Why not challenge them to create a 10-second video on one of the following topics:

- An introduction to their to-be-read pile
- 'I've never found anything I want read, but I do like...'
- The books that make me...laugh/cry/think/change the way I act
- A top tip or reading recommendation
- A 10-second summary of a book

You can also use our resource [on Book reviews and trailers on the Scottish Book Trust website](#).

## Activity 4: Who is reading this?

Ask your staff to submit some of their favourite titles and ask students to match the staff member to the book.

## Activity 5: Catch them reading!

Can teachers conceal a sneaky lesson-time read? Every student who spots a teacher reading earns a point, either for themselves or for the whole class. Students caught reading in lessons earn bonus points.



## **Classroom activities**

### Activity 1: Short stories

LIT 3-01a/4-01a, LIT 3-04a/4-04a, LIT 3-07a/4-07a

Pick a short story for each year group and ask subject teachers to read a section each period before the lesson starts. Save some time for questions. If you read a different story each day, you could discuss which were pupils' favourites. If you read the same story over the course of a few lessons or days, ask pupils to predict what they think will happen next and why.

### Activity 2: Reading identities

LIT 3-11a/4-11a

Invite staff to discuss their reading habits with pupils. You could use our [My Life as a Reader PowerPoint template](#) which contains prompts for talking about your own reading journey, including sharing books you love as well as being honest with the genres or titles you don't enjoy or didn't finish! You could also invite staff to bring in or display the books in their classroom on the day. You can ask pupils to contribute to some of the specific prompts too. Are there any genres they prefer? What are their earliest memories of reading? Where do they like to read?

### Activity 3: Books in every classroom

LIT 3-01a/4-01a, LIT 3-14a/4-14a, LIT 3-16a/4-16a

Reading should be across the curriculum, not just in English class or the library. Why not put pupils in charge of suggesting and researching books that they think could be good for each classroom? You could ask some pupils to visit the school, or local, library to do some research and ask for your suggestions. Your librarian may be able to help you create displays. If you need somewhere to start, we have book lists on our website which suggest books for your [drama](#), [art](#), [music](#), [geography](#), [history](#), [modern studies](#), [maths](#), [science](#), [computer science](#) and [P.E.](#) classroom!

### Activity 4: Book speed dating

LIT 3-02a/4-02a, LIT 3-11a/4-11a, LIT 3-14a/4-14a

This is a great activity for allowing pupils to sample a variety of different books in a short space of time, and to help you get an indication of the books that pupils enjoy reading. Set out several different book stations and ask pupils to pick a book and spend a few minutes reading, before moving onto the next station. Pupils jot down their first impressions of the book as they go, and whether they would like to keep reading. This activity was taken from our [Running reading groups and events](#) resource where you can find more activities!

### Activity 5: Play Book Jenga

LIT 3-02a/4-02a, LIT 3-11a/4-11a

Transform a game of Jenga into an incredible (and fun!) tool for Book Talk. Book Jenga was a game brought to the attention of Scottish Book Trust by secondary school librarian Deena Wren, winner of our [Scottish Book Trust Learning Professional Award](#).

All you will need to create book Jenga is a set of Jenga blocks, a biro or fine liner pen, and your chosen questions!

You play book Jenga by building your tower and taking it in turns to pull out a block and answer the question on it. You can play either by answering the question yourself, or by asking everyone in the group to answer the question before moving on to the next one. The used block is then placed on top of the tower. Gradually the tower builds and becomes less stable. As with all Jenga, the aim is not to topple the tower. The game ends when the tower falls!

To find this full activity see our [Running reading groups and events](#) resource which also contains suggested questions you can use.

## Next steps

Promoting reading for pleasure in your school is important all year, not just on World Book Day! For more support to build a reading culture in your school see:

- Our [World Book Day section of the Scottish Book Trust website](#) gathers activities, articles, videos and further resources to further extend reading for pleasure and World Book Day's £1 titles.
- Our [free Reading Schools programme](#) which offers an accreditation for building a reading culture in your school, as well as support and resources to help you with delivery.
- Our [Schools guide](#) contains more information on the programmes, CLPL and resources from Scottish Book Trust created to support teachers, educators and librarians in schools.
- Our [Building a reading culture webinar and resource](#) contains a guide to building a reading culture in your school, including supporting pupils to read for pleasure, developing your staff's knowledge and ideas for groups and activities.
- World Book Day's [Resources Hub](#) contains lots more reading for pleasure ideas, resources for World Book Day and all year round!

## Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> ["Reading for Change: Performance and Engagement across Countries"](#), PISA 2020

<sup>2</sup> ["Motivation During an Excessively Challenging Reading Task: The Buffering Role of Relative Topic Interest"](#), The Journal of Experimental Education. 2011.

<sup>3</sup> ["The role of home learning environment and emerging insights into the impact of the pandemic"](#). National Literacy Trust. 2022.

<sup>4</sup> ["How teachers can put the right book in the right hand"](#), Katherine Wilkinson for Scottish Book Trust