World Book Day

World Book Day is a charity which, for over twenty years, has been changing lives through a love of books and shared reading. Through our annual celebration, we have engaged with millions of children across the UK and Ireland to give them book of their own and to encourage reading for pleasure.

- **VISION**
  More children, from all backgrounds, developing a life-long habit of reading for pleasure, benefiting from the improved life chances this brings them.

- **MISSION**
  World Book Day's mission is to promote reading for pleasure, offering every child and young person the opportunity to have a book of their own. Reading for pleasure is the single biggest indicator of a child's future success* – more than their family circumstances, their parents' educational background or their income.

- **VALUES**
  World Book Day's values are the lens through which we look at everything we do. They describe how we will go about achieving our purpose. We build them into our work and share them with everyone we work with:

  - **All children reading for pleasure:** We connect with our beneficiaries to ensure that all children in the UK and Ireland, from all backgrounds, can develop a life-long habit of reading for pleasure.

  - **Fun and celebration:** We bring fun, excitement and celebration to our work and show how reading for pleasure can be enjoyable. We bring quality and depth to celebratory, accessible activities.

  - **Integrity:** We are impartial, fair and transparent. Our activity is evidence-based and demonstrates the need for our work and the impact of our work. We are responsible and accountable in all that we do.

  - **Innovation:** We are positive and proactive in order to help improve levels of reading enjoyment and frequency and improve children's life chances.

  - **Collaboration:** We work collaboratively with our partners and stakeholders, engaging with others to share ideas, influence and communicate the value of reading for pleasure.

  - **Respect:** All children and young people's voices and experiences are reflected in what we do. We build relationships based on mutual respect. Those who work with us can expect to be treated fairly and respectfully.

> **I have to read for half an hour as soon as I get home, and normally all I want to just do is like relax and watch TV, so I really don't feel like in the mood for reading.**
>
> All quotes are from children taking part in 'Exploring the Impact of World Book Day' National Literacy Trust and World Book Day, April 2020

** Evidence from the National Literacy Trust, BookTrust and others shows that reading enjoyment and literacy levels are associated with educational attainment and employability skills as well as health, social, emotional and intellectual benefits*

Introduction

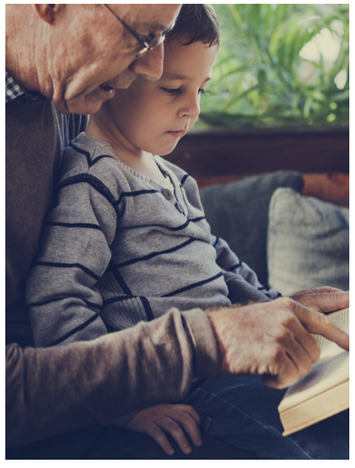
Launched in 1997 and incorporated as a charity in 1999, World Book Day has grown into a hugely successful annual celebration of books and reading. It has engaged with children and young people across the UK and Ireland, offering over 10 million the opportunity to have a book of their own through the distribution of £1 book tokens (€1.50 in Ireland) which are swapped for one of the £1 World Book Day books.

World Book Day is popular and high-profile. It is a national moment that is recognised and understood by 95% of children. Children tell us they enjoy World Book Day, and think of it as one of their favourite school days of the year.

For over twenty years, on the first Thursday in March, and with booksellers, publishers, authors, illustrators, librarians and teachers, and through storytelling, events and a huge variety of fun activities, World Book Day has been changing lives through a love of books and shared reading. World Book Day now provides reading for pleasure resources throughout the year.

> **. . . they are a very good idea because if there's this book that you want, but you can't afford it or your parents just won't let you get it unless it's for free, then you can get this token and say, well, now I can get any book for free, so I might as well get one.**

We have been encouraging families to read together, because when they do children are more likely to read independently. We've been making reading fun, because children are more likely to be readers if they feel enthusiastic and enjoy it. We've been making sure that all children and young people have access to a book of their own, because children who have books of their own enjoy reading more, read more frequently and have higher reading attainment than children who don't. We've been making sure that children can choose their own book, because we know that having that choice encourages children to read independently.



In 2020 alone, over one million £1 books were gifted in only five weeks, and thirty million World Book Day £1 tokens were distributed.

We know we are making a difference. 66% of the primary school teachers we survey say World Book Day changes reading habits. We can see that children read more books, share more books with family and friends, and buy more books because of World Book Day .

At this time in World Book Day's life it is time to reflect, renew and re-establish our purpose through a new five-year strategy, which will take World Book Day into the future.

Our reflections:

- We know there's more to be done to improve levels of reading and book ownership, particularly amongst disadvantaged children. In 2020 social inequalities – economic and educational – have become more exposed by the Covid-19 crisis. World Book Day's mission to encourage today's children to be a generation of readers is even more relevant, because reading for pleasure improves life chances. Children from disadvantaged backgrounds are more likely to be non-readers and have low book ownership. We have a renewed determination to reach even more children and families, because no child should be without a book or miss out on shared reading.

- We have seen the importance of reading to all children. Through the National Literacy Trust's recent survey, with Puffin, children said they enjoyed reading more during lockdown, they discovered books they'd never read before, and that reading encouraged them to dream about the future. This shows us that when children read more, they become more able to think confidently about their future.

- We believe that the huge popularity of World Book Day provides us with a unique opportunity to use this moment of national attention and celebration to work together to make a long lasting impact on children's reading lives, and their futures.

- We can see, through the Centre for Literacy in Primary Education's Reflecting Realities report, that children's books represent far fewer Black, Asian or Minority Ethnic characters than are included in our population. Therefore, it's more important than ever that we work harder to make sure that all children are represented, so that they can make a deep connection with what they read, and so that even more children are encouraged to read for pleasure.

- We can see that World Book Day is popular and awareness of the event is high. However, this popularity may be more amongst those who are already readers. Our evaluation and wider evidence proves that there's more for World Book Day to do to encourage a growing group of children living in challenged economic circumstances to read for pleasure, to improve their life chances.

- We can see that World Book Day must do more to build its credibility and authority as a brand, and to protect our reputation. We must become more confident and use the opportunities that our popularity (including dressing up) brings for deeper engagement with reading and to increase awareness of our mission, so that we can do more to reach those children that most need our support to access books.

- We are proud that World Book Day has its roots in its relationships with the book-selling and publishing industries, and they have supported us for over twenty years to encourage future readers. These relationships are at the core of World Book Day's success, and its future. There has been huge change in the retail market and publishing since World Book Day began, and more ahead as the industry continues to adapt to the digital economy. We have the opportunity to renew industry relationships to do even more together to bring the transformative power of reading for pleasure to more children.

- We know that, as a charity that wants to develop the readers of the future, World Book Day must also adapt to be relevant to new generations of children in a rapidly changing social and technological landscape. The huge shift in the use of digital technology brought about by the lockdown and social restrictions could bring more opportunities for World Book Day to engage with children everywhere. Therefore, we must consider changes that will help us to reach more people and stay relevant to new generations of readers.

- We see this moment as an essential opportunity to review and redevelop our governance, funding strategy and ways of working.

- We know this strategy is about evolution. We will learn and develop in 2021 and build to more significant change, to encourage children and young people to read for pleasure in 2022, and beyond.

Objectives at a glance

With these reflections in mind, we have created THREE KEY OBJECTIVES for the next five years:

1. **Encourage all children to develop reading habits to improve life chances now, and for generations to come.**
2. **Be a powerful, collaborative celebration: an annual national event for all those working to encourage children to read for pleasure.**
3. **Build our financial and administrative resilience to be more effective and increase our impact.**

> **Yes, I have old books, some of my cousin's books, because I have a baby cousin that always comes to my house and I read to her.**
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Objectives and strategy

1 Encourage all children to develop reading habits to improve life chances now, and for generations to come.

Reading for pleasure is the single most important indicator of a child's future educational success (OECD, 2002). The biggest impact on a child's independent reading is whether a parent reads to them.

World Book Day's aim is to reach families, as well as children and schools, to encourage shared reading and reading for pleasure. This will improve life chances for children now, and for generations to come.

We will:

- Ensure that World Book Day is an ally to all children and that all children see themselves represented and reflected in what we do.
- Explore, understand and respond to the evidence on what children think about World Book Day, our impact on reading for pleasure, and the barriers to reading and book ownership. We will develop the World Book Day annual campaign and our activities to respond to the evidence supporting reading for pleasure, to connect to insights and developments in literacy and to support actions that promote and encourage reading.
- Explore how engagement with the popular, high-profile annual World Book Day celebration can be become a springboard to encourage reading together, year-round. We will provide accessible and enjoyable routes to reading, available for all children and families throughout the year.
- Renew our focus on families as an audience, embedding the Share A Story message –based on the evidence of the benefits of reading together for ten minutes a day – in all our communications and
- Develop the World Book Day annual campaign so that it reaches children in different ways. We will encourage more children to discover and develop their identity as readers and encourage more children and their families to adopt habits to create lifetime readers.
- Renew the World Book Day brand: to reflect our vision, mission and values and become more inclusive and effective in reaching less engaged readers and those without access to books at home.
- Establish partnerships with brands and organisations who can improve our reach to families, particularly those who are less engaged readers.
- Develop World Book Day's activities to respond to the National Literacy Trust's evidence on the importance of digital (audio and ebook) reading in reaching new or reluctant readers. We recognise that a love of reading – and so the benefits of that love of reading – doesn't always start with physical books, so we will explore how World Book Day can be available in a digital landscape and different formats to be relevant to more readers.

> **When I got one of the World Book Day ones and read it, it made me want to read other books after I read it.**

2 Be a powerful, collaborative celebration: an annual national event for all those encouraging children to read for pleasure.

World Book Day is an annual moment, with the potential to result in significant awareness of the importance of reading and books.

World Book Day's vision is shared by many other organisations. This gives us the opportunity to becomes a shared national moment, working together to make a long lasting impact on children's reading lives, and their futures. We believe that we can achieve more for children when we work together.

We will ensure that World Book Day's partnerships are collaborative and based on the achievement of this shared goal.

With children, our beneficiaries, we will:

- Listen to what children think about World Book Day and respond to the evidence.
- Involve children in the creation, delivery and evaluation of our work.

With our partners in bookselling, we will:

- Work together to bring more children and families to bookshops, to feel part of a reading community and to discover the transformative power of reading for pleasure to more children.
- Work with our Founder Member, the Booksellers Association, to understand the bookselling environment and how our ways of working together can adapt to better achieve World Book Day's charitable purpose.
- Establish a clear code of engagement to ensure industry support of World Book Day's purpose.
- Refresh the way that World Book Day chooses the £1 book selection: basing the selection on evidence-based guidance to encourage reluctant readers.
- Refresh the way that World Book Day distributes the £1 book token and the provision of books – to ensure that more children can access them.
- Expand our engagement with a wider range of retailers to help us reach a broader range of children and families.

With our partners in publishing, we will:

- Work together to ensure that World Book Day can be an ally to all children, presenting authors, illustrators and books to ensure that all children see themselves and their worlds reflected and represented in what we do.
- Work with our Founder Member, the Publishers Association, to understand the publishing environment and how our ways of working together can adapt to better achieve World Book Day's charitable purpose.
- Establish a clear code of engagement to ensure industry support of World Book Day's purpose.
- Refresh the way that World Book Day chooses the £1 book selection: basing the selection on evidence-based guidance to encourage reluctant readers.
- Refresh the way that World Book Day distributes the £1 book token and the provision of books – to ensure that more children can access them.
- Include a broader range of publishers as part of World Book Day's work, to help us reach a broader range of children and families.

> **because the more books you get, you get more choice. It encourages you.**

With our partners in children's reading and literacy charities, we will:

- Establish World Book Day as a shared national moment, making a collective impact to improve the number and range of children reading for pleasure.
- Ensure that the World Book Day events acts as a gateway to in-depth work and resources provided by our partners.
- Work closely with partners to link to their programmes and to evidence the wider, long-term impact of World Book Day through the work they deliver.
- Establish a clear fundraising relationship; setting expectations for how fundraising will be managed to meet the charitable purpose of all those involved.

With libraries, including school libraries, we will:

- Enable libraries to use the World Book Day campaign more effectively to promote reading engagement and library membership with communities across the UK.
- Reach less engaged readers and disadvantaged communities with a positive message about reading and enabling wider access to books.
- Understand how local organisations (libraries, retailers and schools) can work together to use World Book Day to promote reading engagement

With schools, teachers andeducation settings, we will:

- Ensure that World Book Day supports schools and teachers to develop a reading for pleasure culture and develop their reading for pleasure practice.
- Develop the standard of World Book Day's educational resources, connecting to evidence and professional practice to support reading for pleasure.
- Work with schools and school libraries as gatekeepers to wider engagement with books and reading through book shops.

With our corporate (non-industry) partners, we will:

- Prioritise relationships that improve World Book Day's reach to children and families of all backgrounds.
- Establish clear shared objectives that support World Book Day's purpose.
- Ensure that association with the World Book Day brand is valued and brings a return (of income, impact or both) to World Book Day's purpose.

With children's charities and agencies, we will:

- Establish relationships that support World Book Day's links to our beneficiaries.
- Establish shared objectives in support of World Book Day's purpose.
- Ensure that association with the World Book Day brand is valued and brings a return (of income, impact or both) to World Book Day's purpose.

With authors and illustrators, we will:

- Recognise the contribution authors and illustrators make to World Book Day and support them as colleagues and as advocates of World Book Day's charitable purpose.
- Celebrate and support their work to develop a love of reading in children and young people.

With the media, political stakeholders and other influencers, we will:

- Ensure that everyone understands and can support what World Book Day exists to achieve.
- Use our unique position to influence political and policy-making stakeholders about the importance of reading for pleasure.

> **I think it's a good idea because …whenever I get something new I just want to treasure it because I never get things that are new.**

3 Build our financial and administrative resilience to be more effective and increase our impact.

For World Book Day to deliver its charitable purpose more effectively it needs to work to a governance structure and processes that support this.

We will:

- Establish a new governing framework for World Book Day: to ensure we meet the requirements and principles of good charity governance.
- Establish an Advisory Group: to support the evidence-based development of World Book Day and our collaborative, collective impact partnerships.
- Establish new criteria and processes: to ensure all decision-making is rigorous, accountable and clearly designed to help achieve our charitable purpose.
- Better communicate the impact of what World Book Day does to stakeholders and funders: our annual evaluation will show relevant, achievable and measurable objectives and demonstrate World Book Day's connection to improvements in reading levels, engagement and activity that lead to reading frequency and enjoyment.
- Develop as an organisation: we will build a small core staff and establish a well-managed administration.

We are fortunate to have had significant long-term support from bookselling – including National Book Tokens – and publishing, because of our work to support children and young people to become the readers of the future.

We will manage our resources to ensure that we achieve the greatest impact for the widest range of children and young people, keeping our work simple and efficient.

We will ensure financial stability and independence by investing in our brand and our capacity to generate funds. We will ensure that our reserves policy is met. We may use our reserves to invest in the change set out in this strategy.

We will:

- Build and deliver stable income streams: to ensure World Book Day's resources match our ambitions and we can deliver our purpose confidently.
- Where appropriate, ensure that usage of the World Book Day brand brings financial returns to the charity, which can be used to enhance its charitable work with children and young people.
- Ensure our funding structure is fair and transparent: reviewing and rearticulating our income and the way it is determined as appropriate.
- Establish understanding amongst the public and partners of our charitable status and mission, and review fundraising done under aegis of World Book Day to improve World Book Day's brand protection and to develop its own fundraising capacity.
- Establish a fundraising policy that supports work which encourages children to read, whether through World Book Day's activity or through partners and other charities.
- Ensure effective financial management. We will review and improve our financial processes and procedures.