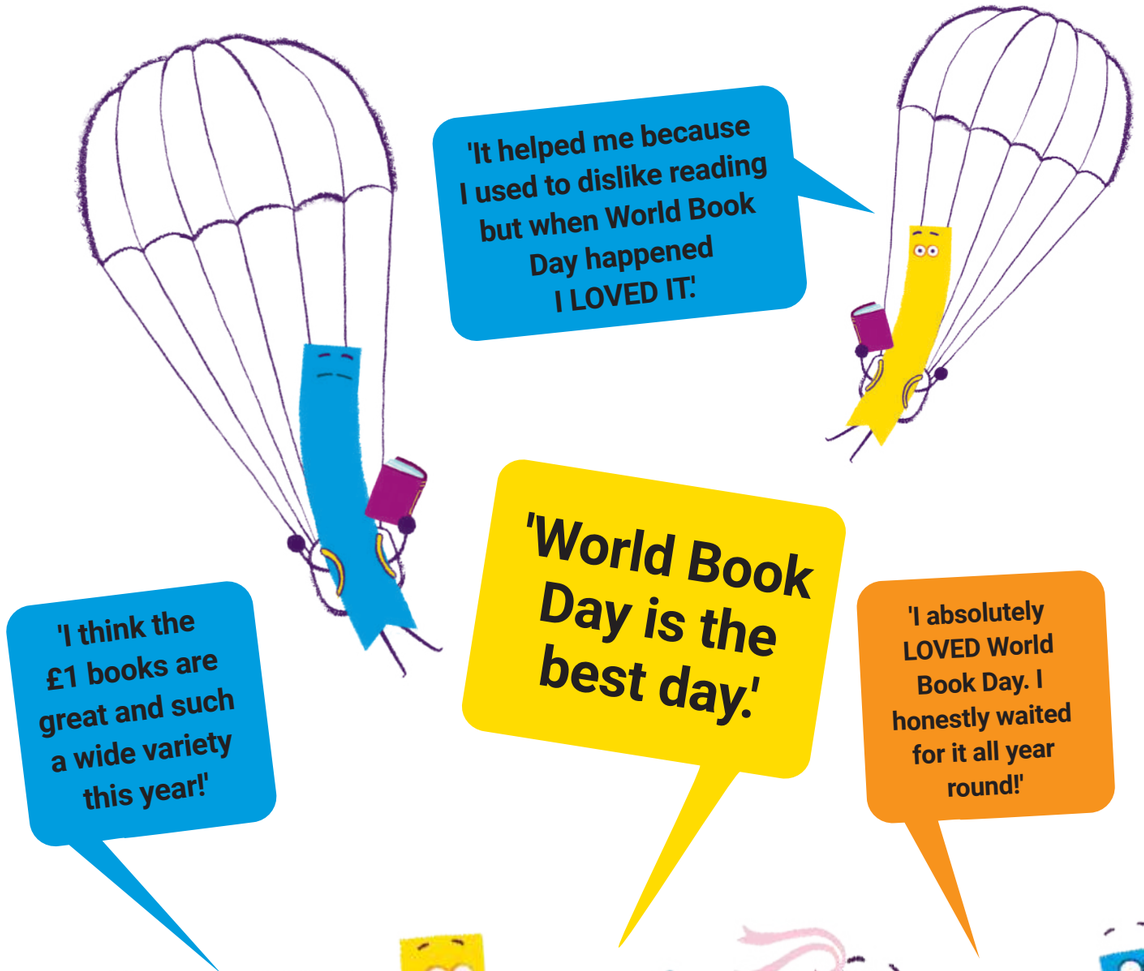


WORLD BOOK DAY®

THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS

NATIONAL BOOK tokens

WORLD BOOK DAY® 2021

OUR IMPACT

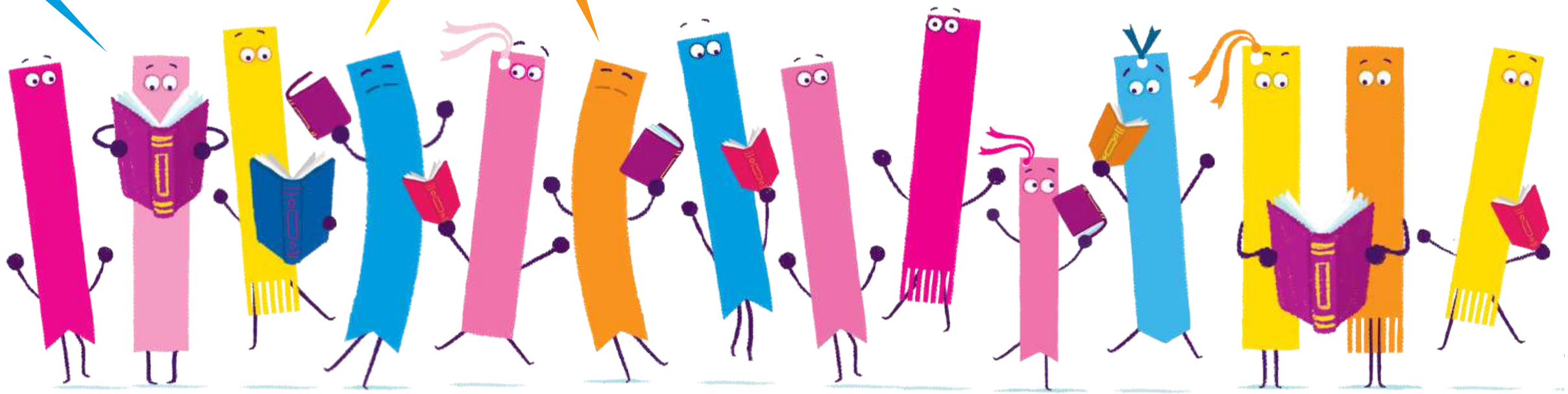


ILLUSTRATION Rob Biddulph

Changing lives through a love of books and shared reading.

World Book Day® is a charity sponsored by National Book Tokens.

Contents

World Book Day's vision & mission 04

Why do we have World Book Day? 05

How we encourage reading to change lives: insights from children, families & partners 07

Highlights of World Book Day 2021 09

Strategy for World Book Day 2021 10–14

Accountability 15

Photograph from World Book Day's 2021 Show Your Shares competition

World Book Day's Vision & Mission

- **Vision**

More children, from all backgrounds, developing a life-long habit of reading for pleasure, benefitting 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*.

* Source: Organisation for Economic Co-operation & Development. 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.

A note from World Book Day's Chair and Chief Executive

Our mission as a charity is clear; we know that developing a love of reading for pleasure has an enormous impact on a child's future. By making books and sharing stories fun, magical and accessible we can encourage the next generation of readers.

In 2021, educational and economic gaps were seriously widened by the pandemic and we wanted World Book Day to make an even greater impact on book poverty, and to be a positive celebration at a difficult time.

As we look forwards to our 25th anniversary, we will build on the successes of World Book Day 2021 to encourage even more children to be readers, book owners and book borrowers – because no child should be without a book or miss out on shared reading.

Stephen Lotinga, Chair, World Book Day

With many children and young people not in school, and access to books a serious concern with both retailers and libraries closed, in 2021 we adapted our plans and worked with our partners to reach those most in need.

We wanted World Book Day to bring a moment of joy and hope to families, so we provided fun and engaging ways for everyone to join in whether they were at home or at school.

It was wonderful to see all the creative ways children, families and schools used World Book Day to encourage children to read for pleasure, making a huge and positive difference to their future.

Cassie Chadderton, Chief Executive, World Book Day

Why do we have World Book Day?

1 Why is reading for pleasure so important?

> 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.

Source: Organisation for Economic Co-operation & Development.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.

2 Reading for pleasure is in decline

> Reading for pleasure is at its lowest level since 2005 with fewer than 1 in 2 (**47.8%**) children and young people aged 9 to 18 saying that they enjoyed reading either very much (**18.4%**) or quite a lot (**29.4%**).

Source: National Literacy Trust Reading Practices in Lockdown, 2020

For many children, access to books is a serious issue - 1 in 7 pupils (**13.2%**) said the book they had 'bought' with their World Book Day book token had been their first book of their own.

Source: 2021 National Literacy Trust, Annual Literacy Survey

3 What encourages reading for pleasure?

- Being read to **regularly for 10 minutes every day**
- **Access** to books at home
- The ability for children to **choose** what they want to read
- Having trusted adults **sharing and recommending** books to them
- The reading experience is **enjoyable**
- Being given **time to read**

4 World Book Day promotes reading for pleasure by:

- Encouraging more children and families to read, particularly those from disadvantaged/low-income backgrounds.
- Changing behaviours, so more families are reading together for **10 minutes a day**.
- Transforming attitudes to reading, making books fun and accessible for everyone.
- Celebrating the joy of books, authors, illustrators and reading for pleasure.
- Ensuring the discovery of **£1 World Book Day titles** and other books.

How we encourage reading to change lives

Photograph from World Book Day's 2021 Show Your Shares competition

> It helped me because I used to dislike reading but when World Book Day happened I LOVED IT.
>
> - Exploring the Impact of World Book Day Report, National Literacy Trust

From children

'I absolutely loved World Book Day . . . I honestly waited for [it] all year round'

'World Book Day made me want to move out of my comfort zone and read or try reading things I have never wanted or tried reading before.'

'...it's better to get a book token so then you don't have to spend as much money or your parents don't. They'd be happy to take you because they don't have to spend any money.'

Exploring the Impact of World Book Day Report, National Literacy Trust

'World Book Day is the best day.'

Quote taken from family videos created for World Book Day by FMCM in partnership with the National Literacy Trust

> I just want to treasure it because I never get things that are new.
>
> - Exploring the Impact of World Book Day Report, National Literacy Trust

From families

'I think that what is happening is great. I do believe that all children and teenagers should continue to be encouraged to enjoy reading as it fosters tomorrow's thinkers.'

'I think the £1 books are great and you provided such a wider variety this year.'

'It was nice to do activities all week that were related to stories and reading and find out what they normally do at school.'

World Book Day survey to parents, 2021

> It made reading a priority for the day.
>
> - World Book Day survey to parents, 2021

From schools

'This year it was very difficult for the children to get their books due to covid restrictions. However, I thought the website resources were excellent and our children used the website resources loads at home and at school. The live author talks were wonderful as were the pre-recorded author workshops.'

'World Book Day is the day when the entire focus is on books and making books fun and accessible it is always fun!'

World Book Day survey to parents, 2021

> The fact that it is a day focussed on reading makes it feel special and memorable whilst highlighting how important and beneficial it is to read for pleasure.

From libraries

'World Book Day always puts a real focus on the importance of books to children and that message was more important than ever this year.'

Gateshead Libraries

'World Book Day is always a highlight of the library year. It is a special day when public libraries join forces with schools, school libraries and school library services to celebrate the joy of reading with children and their families. In 2021 despite lockdown, public libraries were able to creatively adapt plans, and work with partners to ensure that they were actively getting books into the hands of children. We know how much children have needed and valued stories as an escape and a comfort in this turbulent year and we are really proud of the way public libraries have responded to ensure they play a part in important reading events across the year.'

Sarah Mears MBE, Programme Manager, Libraries Connected

> To actually own your first book is something that you're never going to forget. (...) That first book will be there forever. And it's hopefully going to lead children to reading more and more, discovering different authors and different subjects. I think for a lot of children out there, **World Book Day actually means the birth of reading.** HRH The Duchess of Cornwall

From prisons

We will be posting a copy to the children and then giving Dad the same copy so they can read together on a purple (video calls) visits. It's also a great conversation starter if Dad and his child are reading the same book it's something to talk about in letters and on the phone.

HMP Perth

'Thank you for the book, after not seeing my children for so long it was hard to know what to talk about on the phone or in letters so we could read some pages together and then read some on our own and talk about it a few days later.'

'Thank you so much my daughter loved getting the book from me and her mum says she reads it every night at bedtime.'

'My sons loved receiving their books in the post they read them to me on a purple visit and I could draw them pictures from the books and post them to them. Thank you so much you don't know how much these small things help.'

HMP Rochester

From booksellers

'We weren't able to invite school children to the bookshop (usually we welcome over 350 children from local schools) but we found ways of getting books to schools instead and even managed a couple of alfresco storytelling sessions in playgrounds with hot chocolate and star jumps to keep us warm!'

'We bought an outdoor display stand and stacked the books on it with a collection box for the tokens. We wanted to make sure the children still had the excitement of choosing their own book.'

'We linked with local schools and put together a 'voucher & collect' gazebo.'

> I did pop up World Book Day shops at local schools in the playground.

From publishers

'With our diverse Leicester heritage, Sweet Cherry aims to bring great stories within the reach of children from all backgrounds and abilities and so World Book Day is a campaign that's close to our hearts. The proven benefits of reading for pleasure are endless, and every year we put all of our resources and efforts into driving literacy rates higher and encourage our local community to read more.'

Divia Kainth, Head of Sales and Marketing, Sweet Cherry

'HarperCollins were delighted to support and take part in World Book Day 2021 in particular during such a difficult year for many children and families, making this year's messaging around sharing a story and celebrating reading even more important than ever. HarperCollins hosted some incredible virtual events to celebrate World Book Day, including a school assembly with David Walliams that was streamed into 5000 schools, 17,000 households reaching 454k viewers.'

Elisa Offord, Marketing Director, HarperCollins Children's Books

From partners

'Books and stories are food for the soul, they change lives and nourish futures. It is vital that we come together to ensure that all our children have the access and the opportunity to benefit from the enormous power of reading.'

Louise Johns-Shepherd, CLPE CEO

'Our research shows that over 380,000 children in the most disadvantaged communities don't own a book of their own.We want to highlight our commitment to enabling children's access to books. Books unlock a lifetime of benefits, from increasing wellbeing and confidence, to allowing children to feel represented and understood.'

Jonathan Douglas CBE, Chief Executive of the National Literacy Trust

Highlights of 2021

54k books donated by publishers were distributed via the National Literacy Trust to children least likely to have books along with **24k books** to prison communities, **2.4k** through Read for Good and **2.4k** through libraries.

Engaged **133k** children and young people online with our Share a Story Live digital events programme bringing reading to pleasure for life.

#WorldBookDay (and its brand new emoji) trended at **number 1 on Twitter all day**, with **1.1 million impressions** on World Book Day alone.

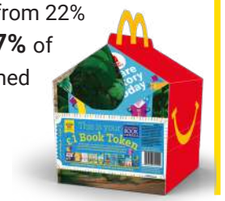
822k people have viewed the charity's first ever official World Book Day song by teacher-turned rapper MC Grammar, inspiring a wave of book-themed raps by pupils and teachers.

Press coverage included eye-catching covers for *The Week Junior* & *Beano*.

The Duchess of Cornwall called World Book Day "**the birth of reading**" for many children at World Book Day's launch event.

Royal Mail unveiled five digitally activated special postboxes across the UK, honouring British authors and illustrators who have done wonderful work in service of children's literature and wellbeing during lockdowns.

£1 book tokens were included with McDonald's Happy Meals along with book-related activities reaching more families. **63%** of parents were aware of the promotion (up from 22% in 2020) and **17%** of children redeemed their token in a participating bookshop.

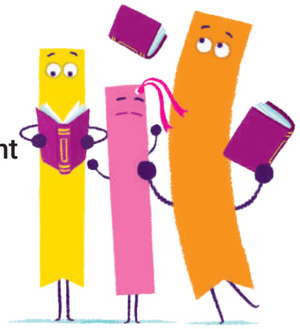


WBD McDonald's 2021 Review

Booksellers created eye-catching window displays & adapted plans to engage with children up and down the country.

Strategy for World Book Day 2021

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.



Our 'core five' messages for 2021 were:

1. World Book Day makes sure every child in the UK & Ireland has a book of their very own (sometimes their first).
2. Spending just 10 minutes a day reading with a child makes a big difference to their future success.
3. Discover reading for pleasure! World Book Day makes books and reading a fun part of every child's day.
4. Talk about books together: read with your friends and family to make books more fun, memorable and magic.
5. Covid-19 widened the economic and educational gap. World Book Day helps tackle book poverty and encourages all children to read for pleasure, making a huge and positive difference to their future.

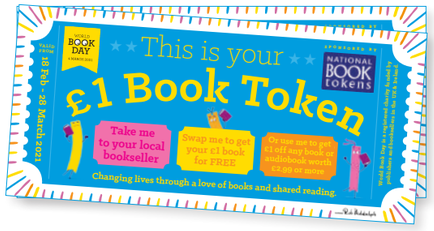
Photograph 1 from World Book Day's 2021 Show Your Shares competition; Photograph 2 still from family videos created for World Book Day by FMCM in partnership with the National Literacy Trust

World Book Day 2021: What we did

Strategy Point 1

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

- Over **2 million books** were printed in 2021 giving children and young people **12 exciting books** to choose from and own*. **22%** of children discover new books via World Book Day.
  (Source: Nielsen Deep Dive, 2019)
- Book tokens were distributed to **45k** early years, nursery, primary and secondary schools in the UK and Ireland giving every child and young person the chance to have a book of their own. **23k** schools and nurseries/pre-schools requested our new digital £1 token.
- Token reach was significantly extended through our partnerships with McDonald's Happy Meals and children's comics/magazines.



- **133k** children and young people joined us online for our Share a Story Live digital events programme bringing reading to pleasure for life. **4.5k** classrooms tuned in to the events during World Book Day week.

> **We loved this year's virtual experience - it could not have been better!**
>
> - Teacher, School Survey 2021

> **World Book Day aims to reach families, as well as children and schools, to encourage shared reading and reading for pleasure.**

- New families hub launched on worldbookday.com with online events and resources encouraging families to enjoy reading together from free audiobooks to 10-minute story videos.

> **It was a lovely break from home learning. Really appreciated.**
>
> - Parent Survey 2021

- Short films produced in partnership with the NLT demonstrated how every family can enjoy and overcome barriers to reading together.
- Our Show Your Shares competition encouraged families to share images of themselves enjoying books and sharing stories together.

*In 2021, due to the lockdown restrictions, it was not possible to gather comprehensive date on £1 token redemptions or £1 book 'sales' through retailers.

> **To ensure that World Book Day is an ally to all children and that all children see themselves represented and reflected in what we do.**

- The new **World Book Day Book Club** gives children even more diverse reading recommendations throughout the year.
- The **RNIB & Guide Dogs** created large print, braille & audio versions of the £1 books to enable all children to enjoy the titles.
- World Book Day's teen and young adult research project, in partnership with the **National Literacy Trust** and supported by authors including **Holly Bourne** and the **Black Girls Book Club**, began to explore how young people feel about reading.

> **We developed the World Book Day annual campaign and activities to respond to the evidence supporting reading for pleasure and to provide accessible and enjoyable routes to reading, available for all children and families throughout the year.**

- We created a wide range of evidence-based resources including Author & Illustrator Academy videos/classroom resources, an official World Book Day song with MC Grammar with accompanying activity pack and partner resources with Twinkl, BBC Education and Oak Academy. This work was made possible by a grant to World Book Day from the Charity of Sir Richard Whittington.

> **'MC Grammar's song was pure joy this year. The website is awash with author masterclasses and other fun and enjoyable content.'**
>
> - Teacher, World Book Day Teacher Survey, 2021

- Online resource packs for teachers and nursery leaders packed with reading for pleasure ideas and activities reached **400k views** in World Book Day week. Traffic to the website hit **2.2 million views** on World Book Day, double our usual numbers.
- Introduced the **World Book Day Book Club** and **Share A Story Corner** videos & activities to provide deeper connections with books and encourage reading for pleasure all year round.
- Supported choice and accessibility by introducing new texts in a variety of ways from video stories to free audiobooks (audiobooks listens stand at **586K** listens since launch, **216K** on World Book Day alone)

> **As a teacher and as a father, we share the same mission: to promote the magic of books and reading. To know that my song might just be the reason a child picks up or receives a book of their very own this World Book Day is just incredible!**
>
> World Book Day Ambassador MG Grammar, aka Jacob Mitchell

Strategy Point 2

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

With our charity partners, we:

- Distributed an incredible **54k** books through the **National Literacy Trust** hubs, **24k** books through our prisons outreach, and **2.4k** to schools through **Read for Good** to children in disadvantaged areas across the country.
- **BookTrust**'s network of **BookStart Coordinators** working in libraries and community settings distributed **90k £1 book tokens**.
- The **Scottish BookTrust** distributed the tokens through their **Book Bug for the Home** programme.
- **Reading Force** provided £1 tokens to children with parents in the Forces.
- With leading literacy organisations (**BookTrust, CLPE, National Literacy Trust, The Reading Agency,** and **Egmont**) we told the story of reading during lockdown, evidencing the impact of the pandemic on reading for pleasure and children's life chances.

With our partners in publishing, we:

- Coordinated the generous donation from publishers of over **80k £1 books** into community projects, prisons outreach, schools and libraries to directly reach children and young people.
- Celebrated the industry coming together to support reading for pleasure with story-telling sessions, special assemblies, author & illustrator workshops and community initiatives.

With our partners in bookselling, we:

- Brought the joy of reading to children and helped more families feel part of a reading community through pop-up bookshops, alfresco storytelling sessions and outdoor displays – all despite lockdown restrictions.

With libraries, including school libraries, we:

- Reached disadvantaged communities with a positive message about reading and books. We worked with libraries in Blackpool, Middlesbrough, Nottingham and Doncaster to get **2.4k £1 books** directly to the children in communities where literacy levels are low.

With authors, illustrators and influencers, we:

- Promoted the joy of books and reading with a wave of support from authors, illustrators, celebrities and influencers including **Adam Kay, Konnie Huq, Paddy McGuinness, Lloyd Grossman, Marian Keyes, Doctor Who, Malorie Blackman, Jessie Lingard, Greg James, Tony Mortimer, Charlie Higson, Tom Fletcher, Harry Kane, and The Royal Family.**
- Created **ten-minute story share readings** from popular children's authors and illustrators for families to enjoy together.

> **...when access to books becomes difficult the whole of society suffers; when our youngest miss out on those stories that shape the adults they could become. We must keep striving for a metaphorical return to the campfire, sharing all of our stories and putting those stories into the hands of all of our children.** Joseph Coelho, World Book Day author

With our corporate partners, we:

- Boosted engagement with families by working with McDonald's to include the £1 book token on Happy Meal boxes in the UK & Ireland along with fun reading activity packs. **63%** of parents were aware of the World Book Day promotion (up from 22% in 2020). **66%** of children noticed the token on the box and **89%** of those said they liked it. **17%** redeemed their token in a participating bookshop (down from 34% in 2020*). WBD McDonald's 2021 Review
- Raised awareness with **Royal Mail** giving post boxes a World Book Day makeover honouring authors and illustrators who'd done wonderful work for children's reading during the lockdowns.There was also a special World Book Day postmark on the day.

- Helped **50 professional football club community organisations** across the country deliver £1 books to local schools through their **Premier League Primary Stars sessions** in partnership with the **National Literacy Trust & Morrisons**.

With the media and political stakeholders, we:

- Created a Twitter emoji; **#WorldBookDay** trended at number 1 on Twitter all day, with **2.5 million impressions** over the week and **1.1 million impressions** on World Book Day.
- Ran a far-reaching media campaign across print, TV, and social networks with coverage including **BBC Breakfast**, **Channel 5 News**, ***The Guardian*** and **Press Association news**, plus a World Book Day-themed edition of the ***Beano*** and ***The Week Junior***.
- Worked with the **DfE**, **DCMS** and our MP champions (Nickie Aiken MP, Lyn Brown MP and Jamie Stone MP) to promote the importance of reading for pleasure. Social media support came from **PM Boris Johnson**, Gavin Williamson MP, Oliver Dowden MP and Valerie Vaz MP and over 50 other MPs who joined our Show Your Shares competition to win 600 books for their constituency.

Strategy Point 3

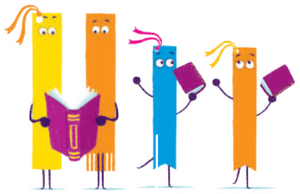
Build our financial and administrative resilience to be more effective and increase our impact.

- Refreshed our messaging to focus on our charitable role. **8%** of the UK's population found out we were a charity in 2021 (IpsosMori).
- We began fundraising for World Book Day with a JustGiving profile, and World Book Day merchandise through our partners Pawprint Family (badges) and CIC GoodStitch (t-shirts).
- Established a new governing framework for World Book Day to ensure we meet the requirements and principles of good charity governance.
- Established an Advisory Group to support the evidence-based development of World Book Day and our collaborative, collective impact partnerships.

* NB Non-essential retail was closed due to national lockdown.

Accountability | Evaluate to measure the impact of World Book Day on our beneficiaries.

As part of our 2020-25 strategy we will look at the impact that World Book Day makes and understand how to reach our beneficiaries more effectively.



From the 2021 NLT, Annual Literacy Survey, (relating to World Book Day 2020), we can see:

- **96.9%** of children and young people have heard of World Book Day **(up from 95.9%)**
- **Nearly 2 in 3 children (64.8%)** of children took part in a World Book Day event or activity (up from **46.8%** in 2019). This rose to **81.8%** for primary school age children.
- **1 in 7 pupils** (**13.2%**) said that the book they 'bought' with their World Book Day book token had been their first book of their own. Among children receiving free school meals, this number rose to **1 in 5 (18.8%)**.

As a result of World Book Day, primary children said they:

	2019	2020
Read more books	*62.3%*	54.7%
Talk more about books with their family and friends	*50.6%*	45.3%
Share more books with their family and friends	*46.1%*	37.8%
Borrow more books from the library	*49.4%*	29.6%
Buy more books	*42%*	40%
Read more with their parents	*40%*	30.5%

Source: NLT, Annual Literacy Survey, 2021. Figures refer to the year World Book Day took place. NB The survey was conducted during lockdown so figures need to be considered in this context.

From the Nielsen, Understanding the Children's Book Consumer, 2020, data we can see:

STATEMENTS RELATING TO WORLD BOOK DAY (% TRUE)	2018	2019	2020
World Book Day makes children more enthusiastic about books and reading	27%	24%	27%
There is a good selection of World Book Day books for children to choose from	26%	24%	24%
The World Book Day voucher encourages children to go in to bookshops	28%	23%	24%
Parents say World Book Day is more about school than home reading	22%	21%	22%
World Book Day encourages parents to read to their child	22%	19%	21%

Figures relate to the year the data was taken and refer to the World Book Day that took place the year before.

What children like best about World Book Day:

	2018	2019	2020
Being read to	17%	16%	14%
Receiving book voucher/ getting a new book	25%	25%	26%
Being able to choose a book themselves	24%	23%	24%
Dressing up at school	33%	35%	34%
Nothing: don't like/ take part in World Book Day	26%	30%	27%

Source: Nielsen, Understanding the Children's Book Consumer, 2020

96.9% **of children and young people have heard of World Book Day**

Source: NLT, Annual Literacy Survey, 2021 referring to World Book Day 2020

World Book Day's annual survey to schools/ nurseries taken just after World Book Day took place in 2021, shows awareness/ agreement levels for the following statements:

	EARLY YEARS	PRIMARY	SECONDARY
Our mission is to offer every child and young person the opportunity to read and love books.	89%	89%	93%
We aim to make sure that all children and young people have access to a book of their own.	89%	90%	90%
We aim to inspire parents and carers to read with their children of all ages for 10 minutes every day.	77%	62%	62%
World Book Day is a charity funded by publishers and booksellers in the UK & Ireland.	44%	54%	74%
World Book Day is extremely/very effective in fostering a reading for pleasure culture in your setting.	65%	70%	37%
World Book Day is extremely/very effective in reaching reluctant readers.	49%	35%	14%

From our survey with parents (2021) we can see that:

- **28.8%** of parents/carers said World Book Day made their child more enthusiastic about books and reading.
- **28.1%** of parents/carers were encouraged to read with their child as a result of World Book Day.