



SPONSORED BY

NATIONAL
BOOK
tokens

World Book Day

Our Impact 2024





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OUR VISION

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

OUR 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.



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

Welcome to our Impact Report 2024. Fewer children and young people reading for pleasure is a societal issue that World Book Day is addressing head on. If children do not read for pleasure they're less likely to benefit from a whole range of positive outcomes.



This year our new research on children's motivation to read made headline news. The findings were stark: 1 in 5 kids feel judged for what they read. The message was clear: children will find reading fun if they can choose what, when and how they read.

We aim to empower children to have autonomy over their reading by choosing one of the 2 million £1/€1.50 books printed, and by giving them the freedom to discover reading on their own terms through our events and materials. We encourage the adults surrounding them to bring our campaign message of 'Read Your Way' to life, demonstrating how enjoyable and accessible reading can be.

Together we can turn the tide and encourage more children to be readers, giving a whole generation the improved life-chances this brings.

Emma Scott
Chair

It takes many people and partners to make World Book Day's work happen. This year, with publishers and other partners, we included more children in the joy and benefits of reading by taking 104,000 books directly to them. 24,000 went to libraries in areas of high deprivation without a bookshop nearby. Here, families could take part in our unique World Book Day reading celebrations and exchange their £1 token for a £1 book in a relaxed space. And we continued to work with HMP Prisons, giving visiting children a chance to choose books and read with their loved ones.



Realising our vision depends on the imagination, involvement and initiative of a wide range of colleagues and partners. Thank you to everyone who takes part to give children the life-changing superpower of reading, on World Book Day and every day of the year.

Cassie Chadderton
Chief Executive



“
I don't have any
books at home
so I can't wait
to read this!

Child, 2024 survey

”

Why do we have World Book Day?



World Book Day improves children's life chances, particularly those growing up in disadvantage and inequality, by encouraging reading for pleasure.

Reading for pleasure matters

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.

Fewer children are choosing to read

- In the UK, almost 1 million children (1 in 12) don't have a book of their own (this goes up to 1 in 8 for children receiving Free School Meals).

Source: National Literacy Trust

- Over half of children and young people (56%) don't enjoy reading in their free time.
- Reading for pleasure is at its lowest level since 2005.

Source: National Literacy Trust, Annual Literacy Survey 2023

Reading for pleasure is in decline but World Book Day can help reverse it

Through our annual event in March, filled with **joy, celebration and fun**, we encourage more children to read, and raise awareness of the difference reading makes to their lives.

Through our activities we support families, schools, libraries, bookshops and communities to **help children love reading**.



World Book Day promotes reading for pleasure by:

- Offering every child and young person the opportunity to have a book of their own.
- Promoting reading for pleasure to children and families across the UK and Ireland through events and supporting activities.
- Producing resources that support the development of reading for pleasure.



25% of pupils receiving Free School Meals said the £1 book they 'bought' with their £1 token was the first book of their own.

91% of 5-8 year olds and **76%** of 8-16 year olds took part in a World Book Day event.

35% of children make more time to read as a result of World Book Day.

39% of children find reading more fun.

95% of children have heard of World Book Day.

Source: National Literacy Trust, Annual Literacy Survey 2024

World Book Day in numbers

2m

£1/£1.50 books gifted by booksellers and publishers gave children 15 new and exciting £1/£1.50 books to choose from and own



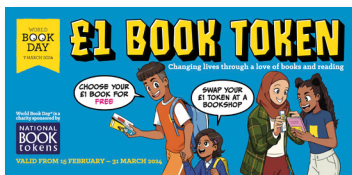
360

children involved in choosing the £1 books



46.5k

£1/£1.50 token packs sent to schools and nurseries



1.4k

accessible copies of the £1/£1.50 books given to children through our partners



RNIB

See differently

∴ ∴

Vision Ireland
the new name for **NCBI**

Calibre audio



Guide Dogs

32.3m

tokens distributed across the UK and Ireland through schools, magazines and partnerships, including **16.3 million** McDonald's Happy Meal® boxes



Half a million

children enjoyed The Great World Book Day Footy and Booky Quiz, in partnership with the National Literacy Trust, featuring players from the Premier League, Football League and Women's Super League. Schools across the country tuned in to the World Book Day BBC Teach Live Lesson

National Literacy Trust

Change your story

BBC Teach

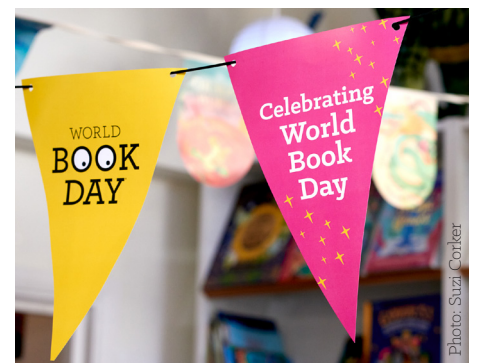
Patients at

Great Ormond Street Hospital

experienced the magic of World Book Day with a pop-up bookshop, fun activities and audiobooks from our official audio partner Yoto



Our £1/£1.50 book authors and illustrators joined in the celebrations with the World Book Day Bookshop Tour



6.3m

motorists reached through digital display advertising at motorway stations across the country thanks to free digital advertising space from i-media



Reception at 10
Downing Street
and cross-party
support from

165 MPs

McDonald's gifted

318.6k

Mr Men & Little
Miss books as
part of their
World Book Day
promotion



Extensive online and print
coverage including BBC
Breakfast, CBBC, CBeebies
and Lorraine

CBeebies
BBC

CBBC

BBC
BREAKFAST

Lorraine



Our Shop to Support partners donated to the charity
through jewellery collections, clothing apparel,
badges, bookmarks, celebration packs, costumes,
free entry into attractions for children and more

3.5k

booksellers
took part in the
festivities with
events, school
visits and brilliant
displays



1.9k libraries

hosted events, created
displays and led
activities about the joy
of reading and book
discovery in their
communities

23k

listens on our World of Stories free
audiobooks hub thanks to publishers
and our official audio partner Yoto



104.4k

£1/£1.50 books donated
by publishers distributed
directly to children in
under-served
communities, including
24k to every prison in
the UK for family visits



THE
JULIA AND HANS RAUSING
TRUST

**Scottish
Book Trust**
inspiring readers and writers



Supported using public funding by
**ARTS COUNCIL
ENGLAND**

27k

downloads of schools
and early years packs



World Book Day's strategy and impact

1

Increase the reach and impact of the World Book Day annual campaign: giving every child the opportunity to be a reader by increasing reach and addressing behavioural and economic barriers.

We embedded a behavioural science approach in the delivery of World Book Day's annual campaign in 2024.

Our research, commissioned from Beano Brain and funded by the Foyle Foundation, provided real insight into messaging that might help to change reading attitudes amongst children and adults. This resulted in the 'Read Your Way' campaign platform. We put children's voices at the centre of telling a bold story around a societal problem. The research resulted in an authentic approach that resonated with media and sparked headlines, radio and TV interviews and social conversation in The Guardian, The Times, The Sun, Daily Mail and others.

We empowered children and young people to discover reading on their own terms, and as a hobby. And we stood as an ally for grown-ups in libraries, bookshops and schools by providing webinars, resources and inspiration for bringing Read Your Way to life.



“

Love the Read Your Way messaging which speaks to choice and engaging with whichever books you want in whatever way you want to read.

Librarian, Halton

48% of schools think World Book Day is effective in reaching reluctant readers (up from 35% in 2021)

1 in 5 children said they felt judged for what they read.

“Adults think proper reading is... non-fiction, thick books, books with only words.”

World Book Day focus group respondent, 2023

Over a third of children say they cannot choose what they want to read at home (34%) or at school (35%).

“I have had a child in the classroom and they had the book that they thought they wanted me to see they were reading, and underneath that, the book they wanted to read. They're hiding them away.”

Teacher, Buckingham Primary School, Hampton

17% said they would find reading more enjoyable if they saw their parents reading – only a quarter (25%) say their parents relax by reading in the home compared to scrolling on their phone (56%), watching TV (52%) or watching their phone or tablet (40%).

“Adults usually tell you to read but then they don't read and go on their phones. My teachers and my dad do that!”

Girl, 11, Non-Reader, Beano Brain research, 2023

69% positive media sentiment (up 8% since 2022)

The research provided strong surround sound for other conversations around dressing up and the cost of living. It also created a bank of evidence to build World Book Day's case to focus on reading for pleasure with media, political audiences and to attract partners in the future.

Reading is best when...

When World Book Day asked children when reading is best, autonomy and control were by far the most important factors. They said reading is best:

- when they can choose **what** to read (47%)
- when they can choose **when** to read (42%)
- when they can choose **where** to read (37%)
- If they had more freedom to read in other ways, such as graphic novels/ audiobooks (25%)

Beano Brain research, 2023



2

Improve life chances for children through reading: activities meet the charity's purpose and the needs of beneficiaries – particularly those from lower socio-economic groups.

Our targeted work in 2024 focussed on providing children, who otherwise wouldn't participate, with access to the World Book Day celebrations. We realised this by trialling new World Book Day activations in libraries, prisons and Great Ormond Street Hospital.

Innovating in under-served communities

We gave more children the choice to read.

We delivered four key events in under-served communities, in areas of high deprivation. All four areas have statistically low literacy levels and are more than three miles away from retailers who stock the books. These events led to a number of schools rejoining World Book Day celebrations.

We made reading fun. We trialled participative events in 20 libraries which showcased the six reading for pleasure principles in a creative and child-centred way. We tested delivery of the events as a curated offer from World Book Day with the support of Arts Council England and with libraries planning and running the celebrations themselves.

Spotlight on prisons



We distributed a total of 24k £1 books across every prison in the UK. Children were gifted the books by their parents and enjoyed sharing them together during family visiting times.

"The men are always very grateful to receive their books on the visits and it encourages dads to sit and read with their children."

"I don't have any books at home so I can't wait to read this!"

Feedback from prison distribution

“We tried something a bit different with our WBD class visits – we focussed on books and reading instead of what a library is, and the impact of that has been significant . . . The children have not stopped talking about their experience.”

Librarians, Holton

We provided access to books. We donated £1/€1.50 books to 20 libraries in our target areas. For the first time, children could exchange their book token in a library, where their families wouldn't feel the pressure to make another purchase. In 2024, over 4k children used a library to redeem their token.

Made possible with support from Julia and Hans Rausing

“The March rise was highest in junior book borrowing. There's no doubt WBD contributed significantly all round to footfall borrowing and new members.”

Librarian, Torquay

We took the celebrations to children in hospitals. This included a special event at Great Ormond Street Hospital in partnership with our official audio sponsor Yoto.

“To see so many happy relaxed faces was a joy - the patients took part in World Book Day celebrations that they may have otherwise missed out on.”

Lizzie Penn, Senior Play Specialist at GOSH

We continued our work with partners to make the £1/€1.50 books accessible. We are grateful for the support of Vision Ireland, RNIB, Calibre, Guide Dogs, Coram Beanstalk and Bag Books.

121% more children and young people accessed the large print editions of the £1 books through Guide Dogs (up from 2023)

Map showing the distribution of 104.4k World Book Day books through our community partners



With thanks to partners and funders



-  Prisons
-  National Literacy Trust (including via Club Community Organisations running Premier League Primary Stars)
-  Libraries
-  National Literacy Trust/Hubs
-  Scottish Book Trust
-  Books Council of Wales
-  Other Community Partners



**“
Staff members love
giving the tokens out
to the children; to see
them smile when they
say they can go and
buy a book with it is
wonderful.”**

Early years practitioner, 2024 survey

3 Nurture and strengthen the World Book Day brand for the long-term benefit of our beneficiaries, stakeholders and partners.

World Book Day has strong brand recognition (95% of children and 86% of adults have heard of World Book Day) and we are strengthening our brand position for the long term. This enables us to drive forward our mission to promote reading for pleasure and the difference it can make to the lives of the children and young people we work with.

In 2024, we focussed on:

- A clearer articulation of World Book Day's purpose and distinct approach that clarified our brand. This led to more successful partnerships.
- The development of World Book Day's unique approach to reading events (see pages 9-11) that strengthened World Book Day's distinctive identity, leading to a more impactful experience for all stakeholders.
- Our 2024 illustrator, Vivian Truong, was briefed with the barriers and six principles and delivered accessible illustrative assets **demonstrating reading for pleasure in a 'real' context** with a view to representing Britain's diverse communities.



4 Build operational capacity and revenue to support the development of the charity.

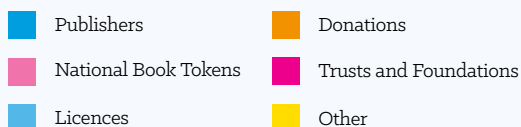
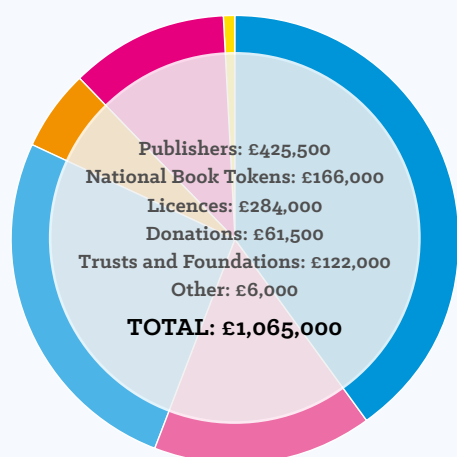
We have utilised the strengthening of the World Book Day brand and presence to increase revenue by **+41%** since 2020. We have also achieved a greater diversity of income sources.

We are building strong partnerships with companies who showcase the World Book Day brand to reach families, and donate a % of sales to the charity.

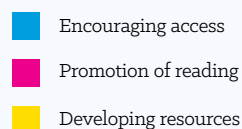
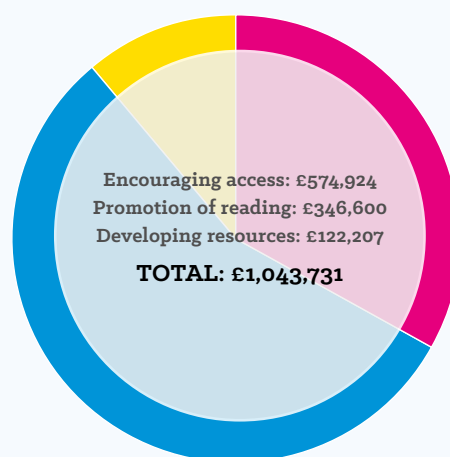


World Book Day partnerships with Tatty Devine (far left), Party Delights (left) and Joanie Clothing

How World Book Day was funded in 2023/24



How funds were spent



Governance

World Book Day is a registered charity (no.1079257) and company limited by guarantee (no.03783095). It has two Founder Members (Booksellers Association and Publishers Association) who may also nominate one additional individual or organisation. There are twelve Trustees, made up of three people appointed by the BA and PA and six others (one of whom is our Chair, Emma Scott).

The role of World Book Day's Trustees is to govern the organisation and provide overall direction to achieve the charity's aims. Trustees have legal responsibility for the charity's management and administration.

In 2023/2024 we:

- 1 Reviewed the skills and experience of World Book Day's Trustees and mapped them to our Strategic Objectives for 2023-27.
- 2 Appointed four additional Trustees; Richard Flint, Will Obbard, Rebecca Sinclair and Nicole Vanderbilt.
- 3 Undertook an independent governance effectiveness review.
- 4 Took forward Governance training and Trustee development, introducing Chair and Trustee self-assessment.
- 5 Reviewed the charity's brand positioning, agreeing a brand development project to clarify our charity's purpose, values, and impact.
- 6 Further developed Trustee leadership and engagement on income generation.
- 7 Engaged positively with our beneficiaries, audiences and stakeholders.



With thanks

Thank you to all involved in World Book Day from publishers, booksellers, librarians, educators, authors and illustrators to commercial partners, funders and everyone who generously gives their support to help change children's lives through books and reading.

Come and talk to us about working together!

worldbookday.com

hi@worldbookday.com

Sign up for the World Book Day newsletter:
www.worldbookday.com/newsletter-sign-up/

For commercial partnerships get in touch with
Maya Maraj, Commercial Partnerships Manager:
mmaraj@worldbookday.com

Registered address:

**World Book Day Ltd
6 Bell Yard
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Registered charity number:
1079257 (England and Wales)

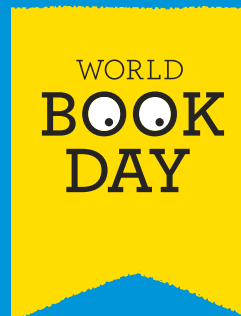
Registered company number:
03783095 (UK)



Photo: Hayley Madden



Photo: Hayley Madden



**Changing lives through
a love of books and reading**