

1. SECRETARY OF STATE LAUNCHES THE READING AGENCY

The Rt Hon Tessa Jowell MP, Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, made a powerful speech at our launch at the British Library on 26 September. She stressed the contribution libraries can make across a range of government agendas, and reinforced the centrality of their reader development role:

"delivering to thousands and thousands of people the unbounded joy of the imagination, confidence in reading, hunger for the latest novel, curiosity in the pursuit of information".

She welcomed the advent of The Reading Agency as

"a breath of fresh air ...a new agency whose time has come. It's time for a rethink. TRA can challenge traditional perceptions and the way we deliver services and urge us to think of new and fresh ways".

2. THEIR READING FUTURES' WEBSITE GOES LIVE

The website developed by the Their Reading Futures programme has now gone live at www.theirreadingfutures.org.uk. This is a major new resource for staff development and training, and a huge achievement for the children's library profession. The content has been developed through consultation training days involving ASCEL and Youth Libraries Group champions, so represents shared thinking on strategic and practical approaches to reader development work. It covers: definitions of reader development; the chance to practice core skills needed to create good reader services for children; outcomes based planning using a self audit framework; advocacy strategies and materials.

The website can act as a stimulus both for independent work and group training, feeding into your existing training programme. As well as work in individual authorities, we hope that regional groups, ASCEL and YLG training will feature TRF. Much of the site is still evolving, especially the advocacy section. We'd very much welcome your ideas and input to the development of powerful new advocacy evidence. The chat facility and email link to the central TRF team offer opportunities to share all this.

3. MAJOR NEW RESOURCES AVAILABLE

Our annual resources brochure with details of new promotions, good practice toolkits and training will be available later in November. We will be posting a copy to the adult reader development contact and the head of children's services in every library authority as well as to our contacts in schools. From the end of November, you will also be able to see all our resources on our www.readingagency.org.uk website, and access a downloadable order form. Promotions include First Choice, targeting emergent adult readers, and underpinning partnership work with basic skills providers; BOOX, promoting reading to 13-16 year olds; Off Route – a reading trail for adult readers.

4. READER DEVELOPMENT AND BASIC LITERACY SKILLS – CONFERENCE AND NEW RESOURCES

Public libraries' work with readers has a vital role to play in tackling the government's targets for improving the nation's basic literacy skills. For the last year we have, in partnership with the National Literacy Trust, been running a programme called The Vital Link which explores how libraries' reader development work can reach and inspire people wanting to improve their basic literacy skills.

The programme has resulted in a range of resources: a new promotion – First Choice; new training; and a good practice toolkit. You'll find full details in our new resources brochure and on our website at the end of November.

On January 28 a major CONFERENCE explores the centrality of the link between libraries and adult basic skills providers in supporting and motivating basic skills learners. Speakers include Baroness Blackstone, Minister for the Arts, and Susan Pember, Director, Adult Basic Skills Strategy Unit. To book a place contact Tania Rhodes-Taylor at the National Literacy Trust. Tel: 020 7828 2435.

For more information on the Vital Link see www.literacytrust.org.uk/vitalink.html

5. BOOK YOUR TRAINING COURSES NOW

We are delighted to announce a range of fixed day training courses held in partnership with Books for Students in Warwickshire. These are ideal for training one or two key members of staff who are in a position to share the learning with colleagues and develop best practice.

There is a booking form at the end of this e-letter.

- Wednesday 11th December 2002: Marketing And Reader Development
- Thursday 16th January 2003: Partnerships with Basic Skills Providers
- Tuesday 11th February 2003: Teenage Reading - Developing Your Service
- Thursday 6th March 2003: Reader Development In Secondary Schools
- Tuesday 13th May 2003 Partnerships with Basic Skills Providers
- Tuesday 17th June 2003: Marketing And Reader Development
- Wednesday 15th October 2003: Reader Development In Secondary Schools

6. WORLD BOOK DAY - ON LINE LIBRARIES' FESTIVAL

We've just had the excellent news that World Book Day Ltd's bid to the Arts Council's Touring Fund has been successful. This means that the library sector will be creating the country's first ever virtual Readers and Writers Festival to mark World Book Day, which next year falls on March 6. Working in partnership with Resource, the Council for Libraries, Museums and Archives, a special festival website will be created, in addition to the usual WBD website and linked to it. The festival will be delivered through The People's Network and will be targeted primarily at pre-school/early years schoolchildren, key stages 1, 2 and 3 and adults.

Schools visiting local libraries to participate in the activities will be encouraged to focus on the featured authors in advance. School Library services will be forewarned and encouraged to loan schools collections of books by featured authors to support preparation.

7. THE ORANGE PRIZE FOR FICTION

The partnership between the Orange Prize For Fiction and libraries through TRA continues to grow and evolve. In 2000 we worked with 7 London authorities, in 2001 with 75 English authorities and in 2002 with 100 authorities across the UK. 2003 looks set to bring further growth. If you would like to consider your authority joining the partnership next year, please contact Penny Shapland on 0871 750 1200 or Ruth Harrison on 0871 750 1205 to discuss.

Please e-mail info@readingagency.org.uk if you would like a copy of the report on this year's partnership.

8. MISS DYNAMITE FRONTS BOOX 8

The agency is continuing Well Worth Reading's long established focus on teenage readers aged 13-16. At the heart of this focus is BOOX, a package designed to inspire young readers from 13 – and validate all kinds of reading. BOOX's annual magazine this year, in a real scoop, is fronted by award winning hip-hop star Miss Dynamite, and explores reading's links to music through an urban Beats section. There are reviews of websites, magazines, books and graphic novels, plus a young person's photostory, celebrity reads and a coded book title quiz.

For public libraries the BOOX package and training supports the development of reader services to teenagers, a more inspired activities programme and improved consultation. For schools and other agencies focusing on young people the package supports delivery of the National Literacy Strategy at Key Stage 3 and PHSE work on personal development and citizenship. The magazine is complemented by reader feedback and book display materials and has a related website – www.boox.org.uk.

9. DEVELOPING READING COMMUNITIES

Berkshire Education Library Service, under the leadership of Jeremy Saunders, has been appointed to lead The Reading Agency's work on Developing Reading Communities. This is an action research programme exploring transferable models of how to link reading activity in schools to the resources of the public library, using Education Extra's reading clubs as a springboard for the partnership.

In three locations, local professionals will be supported in establishing and maintaining partnerships that link children in school reading clubs to a wider range of library-based activities. The pilots will be selected to explore links to three current national areas of development: study support; Creative Partnerships; and Regional Arts Councils' support for reading and writing in school. The key role of school library services in underpinning the development of new models will be carefully explored. The lessons learnt and the partnership models will be disseminated nationally at the end of 2003.

10. SUPPORTING CREATIVE COLLABORATIONS – ARTS, LIBRARIES AND MUSEUMS

You can find a new on line resource at www.artsandlibraries.org.uk/creatingpartnerships. A web published toolkit to support creative partnerships between arts, libraries and museums. Launched at the recent Books Connect conference it provides a step by step guide to building inspirational cultural partnerships. The toolkit passes on the lessons from the East Midlands Books Connect pilot, which explored how books and reading can inspire new ways of working together to reach new audiences.

11. FAMILY READING IN PRISONS

The Big Book Share is a library project that supports parents in prison in contributing to their children's reading and thus plays an important part in family life outside prison. Since November 2000 we have been running a pilot project at HMP Nottingham which is delivered through a partnership between the prison and the public library service.

We are now making available the pilot's resources to other library authorities and prisons. These include: training; a good practice toolkit; a print package of elements which the pilot work showed were important for the success of the programme (like recruitment fliers to be distributed through the prison – for instance under cell doors – and postcards for children and parents in prison to swap book ideas and responses).

You'll find more details in our new resources brochure.

12. BUILDING BOOK TRADE PARTNERSHIPS

We are working with the Public Lending Right to showcase the potential of libraries' work with readers and build stronger partnerships with publishers. We are delighted that Penguin are sponsoring a seminar in late November which aims to shape the agenda for joint work between libraries and the book trade and the potential for greater partnership between the public and commercial sectors. In response to comments made by the President of the Publishers Association at this year's Booksellers Association Conference, the seminar will explore the radical solutions libraries offer to the problem of how to develop the market for reading. These focus on the development of the generic reading experience rather than marketing individual

books. It will also promote the unique database of information on book borrowing trends which PLR produces.

13. READER DEVELOPMENT, MARKETING AND MAINSTREAM LIBRARY USERS

Four of the UK's top-selling authors - Antony Beevor, Minette Walters, Mike Gayle and Barbara Trapido – follow a reading trail in our new Off Route 2 promotion which supports libraries in offering core users more choice, and in attracting new and lapsed users. The second edition of the successful Off Route promotion, launched in 2002, uses a reading trail technique to challenge readers to try something new. Readers follow the celebrity authors as they take up the quirky challenges of the trail and are then invited to take up the challenge themselves!

Off Route uses the pulling power of celebrity authors and is actively populist whilst simultaneously offering depth and breadth of reading choices. There's potential for libraries to use this as a summer reading challenge for adults, an idea that's been successfully trialled in libraries that took part in 2002.

More details in our resources brochure

14. CHATTERBOOKS SCOTLAND

We are delighted to announce the launch of Chatterbooks in Scotland. From November, fifteen library authorities will roll out the Orange funded network of reading groups for 4-12 olds to their children. The launch will take place on November 26th at the new library in Anniesland, Glasgow. Jacqueline Wilson, the programme's Patron, will be leading a group and speaking at the launch.

Pip MacLennan, PR Manager for Orange in Scotland comments:

"We always believed Chatterbooks was a UK initiative. With the success we have had with the scheme in England it seems only natural to bring it up to Scotland, encouraging and enthusing children to participate and enjoy reading."

Meanwhile there's some great feedback from children involved in the scheme.

"I now like doing things in groups with other children, since I started coming to Chatterbooks."

Sam Skett, Halewood Chatterbooks, Knowsley

"I have read books that I wouldn't have touched before. Having all the latest releases on the trolley gives you time to have a look and also to recommend titles you have read to your friends."

Naomi aged 9, Chelmsford Chatterbooks, Essex

15. SUMMER READING CHALLENGE 2003: A NEW WEB SITE FOR CHILDREN

In a new partnership with Resource: the Council for Museums, Libraries and Archives, the 2003 summer reading challenge will link with new content on the People's Network. A specially created Reading Maze for children will offer lots of exciting possibilities for reading journeys and unexpected encounters with authors.

The reading challenge will not require children to have access to the web content to complete the challenge - the website is purely to add value to the reading experience using the unique capabilities of the internet medium. The site will introduce and profile leading children's writers and illustrators. Activities and links to other relevant sites such as Stories from the Web will be included.

As for the challenge's promotional schedule - order forms for materials and books will be sent out in late January, closing date for orders will be the end of March, as usual, with delivery in mid-late May.

16. RADIO 4 PARTNERSHIP

More than half the library authorities in the UK are signed up to the partnership TRA runs with Radio 4, which provides advance information about forthcoming Radio 4 book programmes and a package of display materials to promote them. A recent survey of participating libraries will contribute to improvements to the materials provided and plans to exploit the potential for reader development.

For further information contact penny.shapland@readingagency.org.uk

17. READING FOR HEALTH

TRA is about to embark on a mapping exercise exploring how to increase the impact of reading on the nation's health. A key theme will be how libraries can work in partnership with the health sector to reach more people with the benefits of reading.

The work has been commissioned by the Arts Council of England. Abigail Campbell, Education Officer in the Literature Department, says:

"For some time now we have wanted to map and review reader development activity in health contexts and this work will help us create a baseline against which future activity can be measured. We hope it will be a practical resource to help organisations working or intending to work in this area."

Over the next six months The Reading Agency team will be undertaking an audit of activity - looking at what is happening regionally and nationally in terms of projects, policies, funding and research in the field. In addition the mapping will start to explore a number of key issues around evaluation (how do you measure the benefits of reading when the changes may be very subtle?), partnerships, training and sustainability. We're delighted to be working with Catherine Morris and Bernard Murphy from Kirklees and Calderdale libraries respectively. They will be drawing on the experience of the Reading and You bibliotherapy programme they have been running.

The research is being done in three stages. The initial mapping will be followed by a project audit and an analysis of issues thrown up by the research. A final report is due in the summer of 2003. Organisations working on health related reading development initiatives who would like to feed in their experiences should contact Catherine Morris, (Principal Library Manager for Kirklees Libraries) 01484 221953 or catherine.morris@kirklees.gov.uk

18. TO END

Here's an extract from Miranda McKearney's speech at our launch which might be useful for your advocacy work:

"As well as its importance as a tool for learning, libraries have in the last few years re-embraced reading's role in bringing creativity and quality to people's lives.

There's the most extraordinary and energetic range of work going on. We badly need new indicators to capture this - on the one hand book issues are down but on the other impact studies are showing a huge and changing community engagement with reading.

TRA believes that readers, libraries' core business, should be at the centre of service, resource and partnership development. And that this is firm ground on which to build a 21st century vision and funding for the service. What libraries do with readers is unique and therefore a necessary ingredient of lots of other policy and partnership agendas. This ought to be the basis for unlocking major government investment. No other agency works with readers with the same mixture of access, inspiration, ethos which emphasises community trust and respect.

We've heard how libraries' work with readers delivers on DCMS policy priorities. We'd argue that this work is a phenomenal cultural and learning force through which we can achieve a whole range of national ambitions; a force that many other government departments and initiatives could be harnessing to achieve their objectives in the way that Sure Start is.It's not just our educational dreams that can be realized by harnessing the power of libraries' work with readers. Evidence is emerging that it can help build more cohesive, healthier communities, more creative workplaces and that it can massively enhance people's quality of life and well being.'

19. CONTACT DETAILS

penny.shapland@readingagency.org.uk

The Reading Agency, PO Box 96, St Albans, Herts AL1 3WP

Tel: 0871 750 1200

Fax: 0871 750 1201

20. ORDER FORM FOR TRAINING COURSES

Please return this booking form, in addition to your own documentation if using, to:

TRA Database, Park House, Sandford, Crediton, Devon EX17 4NQ

Tel: 0871 750 1207 **Fax:** 0871 230 7980

e-mail: alison.shakespeare@readingagency.org.uk

Place Booking

Course Date	No. of Places	@ £120 + £21 VAT
Course 10: Marketing and Reader Development		
1. Wed 11 Dec 2002		
2. Tue 17 June 2003		
Course 3: Partnerships with Basic Skills Providers		
3. Course A - Thu 16 Jan 2003		
4. Course B - Tue 13 May 2003		
Course 5: Teenage Reading – Developing Your Service		
5. TRT1 - Tue 11 Feb 2003		
Course 7: Reader Development in Secondary Schools		
6. Thu 6 Mar 2003		
7. Wed 15 Oct 2003		
TOTAL		

Places are limited to 15 per course so early booking is advised.

Confirmation: Invoices are issued on receipt of booking as confirmation of places. Delegates will receive details of time and directions approximately three weeks before the date of the course.

Cancellations: We regret that the training course fees can only be refunded if places are cancelled ten working days before the event.

Mailing: Booker details will be placed on The Reading Agency mailing list. We may occasionally release your name and address to third parties for marketing purposes. If you do NOT wish to receive information from third parties please tick this box.

Delegate details

Date No.	Delegate Name & Job Title	Dietary Req.(if any)

If delegate letter needs to be sent to a different address from the address below please supply details.

Booker Details

Name _____

Job Title _____

Organisation _____

Local Authority _____

Address _____

Postcode _____

e-mail _____

Tel _____ Fax _____

Send no payment with this booking. If invoices are to be sent to a different address please supply the invoice address.

Please quote order reference number here, if required:
