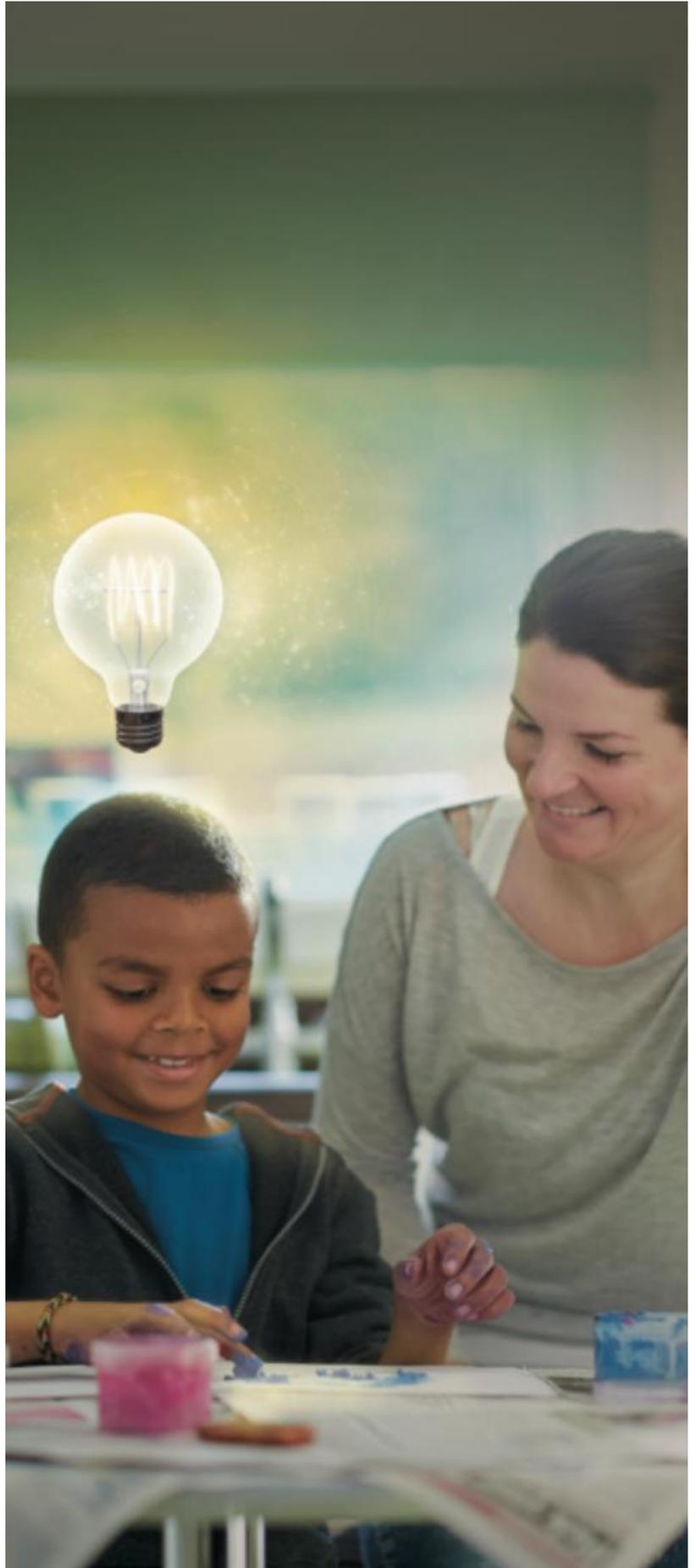


**Ideas for
gifting
Read,
Write, Count
bags**



Gifting is the most important aspect of the Read, Write, Count Bags. How you gift the bags will help to build excitement and enthusiasm about them before children take them home to their parents and carers. How you choose to gift the bags will also have an impact on how the bags are used at home. If you use this opportunity to provide support and advice to parents, it increases the chance that the bags will be used effectively at home.

The bags will arrive at your school between September and early November 2016 and we recommend that you gift the bags to children during Book Week Scotland (21–27 November 2016) as there will be nation-wide promotion during this time.

Book Week Scotland is a national celebration of books and reading. During Book Week Scotland Scottish Book Trust holds around 800 book events all over Scotland with schools, libraries, bookshops and many others. Gifting the bags during Book Week Scotland can draw pupils' and parents' attention to this national celebration and encourage them to participate in the week's events, laying the groundwork for further engagement in reading. In school, Book Week Scotland can provide a platform for lots of activities celebrating books, and there are competitions, games and things to do online, including free online author events.

Find out more about Book Week Scotland at www.bookweekscotland.com.

Here are some ideas and inspiration to help you decide how you want to gift the bags and engage parents.

Send a letter home to parents about the bags before you gift them – this is a simple way to inform parents about the bags and give advice and tips on how to use them at home. We have provided a basic template letter you can use. You might want to adapt it to make it suitable for your parents by, for example, adding in tips about reading together.

Use social media – if your school uses them, Facebook, Twitter and YouTube are good ways to share information about the school's work. While we will provide lots of ideas and information for parents about how to use the bags, you might have some of your own ideas you want to share with them.

You could:

- Before the bags go home, create and post videos or blogs about how to read with children, how to play the counting games and how to get the most out of the writing materials provided;
- After the bags have gone home, have a call to action, asking parents to share what they've done with bags to inspire others.

If you don't have time to create your own content, there are lots of things already available online which you could share on your social media channels to promote engagement with the bags and learning together at home. Here are some examples:

- *Tips, ideas and videos showing how parents and children can learn together at home and when out and about*

www.readwritecount.scot

- *Videos and other ideas from Education Scotland about supporting children's literacy and numeracy at home*

www.educationscotland.gov.uk/parentzone/learningathome/supportingliteracy/index.asp

www.educationscotland.gov.uk/parentzone/learningathome/supportingnumeracy/index.asp

- *Videos showing parents and children reading together from Scottish Book Trust*

scottishbooktrust.com/video-tags/bookbug-bag-videos

Hold an event with parents – sometimes the best way to engage parents in the work of the school is to invite them to an event. You could invite parents into the school and demonstrate how to use the bag contents. Demonstrations might involve modelling how to read aloud with children, how to play the counting games and how to get creative with the writing materials in the bags. This gives parents and children some time to explore the bags together in school, with your support, building their confidence to use them at home.

Read the books/play the games/do the activities together in class before gifting – this can help to build the children's excitement and help them to encourage their parents when the bags go home. We have provided an information document telling you all about the items in the bags so you can plan any classroom activities before the bags arrive.

Visit the local library – libraries are an important part of the Read, Write, Count campaign and if you are gifting during Book Week Scotland, there might be some exciting events on in the library which you could get involved in.

You could work with the librarian to organise a time for children to visit the library and read the books in their bags together and try some of the writing and counting activities. Libraries may also have other activities children could take part in at the event. You could also invite parents along to the event, encouraging parents and children to sign up for a library card.

After doing some activities in the library with the bags, you can then gift them to children to take home.

These are just some ideas for how to make the bag gifting a special event and we hope they provide you with some inspiration. Engaging with parents can be challenging but, when it works, it can have a big impact.

For more information about involving parents in your school, visit www.engagingwithfamilies.co.uk.

Read, Write, Count is a campaign delivered in partnership by the Scottish Government, Scottish Book Trust and Education Scotland.

