



Scottish Teenage Book Prize 2021

Activities to get pupils excited about the shortlist

Age: 12-14

CFE Level: Third Level

Resource created by Scottish Book Trust

scottishbooktrust.com



Scottish Book Trust is a registered company (SC184248) and a Scottish charity (SC027669).

Contents

About this resource.....	1
Resources for additional support needs	1
Before reading the shortlist.....	1
As you read.....	2
Vote	4
Celebrate the shortlist.....	5
Continue your journey.....	6

About this resource

This resource contains great ideas and activities to help you celebrate and run the Scottish Teenage Book Prize with your book group or reading group. Use the activities in this resource to create a buzz about the three shortlisted titles.

The titles on this year's shortlist are:

- *Fin & Rye & Fireflies* by Harry Cook
- *The Infinite* by Patience Agbabi
- *The Infinity Files* by S.M. Wilson

Resources for additional support needs

You can request accessible digital copies of the shortlisted titles from CALL Scotland suitable for e-readers and digital devices. Find out more about the accessible versions and how to request them on the [CALL Scotland Books for All website](#).

Before reading the shortlist

Here are some fun activities you can use to introduce the prize and the shortlist to your pupils.

First lines

One great way to introduce the shortlist to your pupils is to chat about the first lines of each book. The first lines are:

- "We arrive in Lochport on a Friday." From *Fin & Rye & Fireflies* by Harry Cook
- "Something bad just happened and I want to leap back in time to make it unhappen." From *The Infinite* by Patience Agbabi
- "Ash leaned forward, even though she knew it made no difference." From *The Infinity Files* by S.M. Wilson

Get your group to chat about these first lines. What can they figure out about the books from the lines? Can they guess what the genre might be? Which line makes them want to read on and why? Based on these first lines, do they have a particular one they are keen to read first?

Ask pupils to number the lines from one to three by their personal preference, with one being their favourite and three being the least. Tot up the scores. Is there a clear winner? Read this one first!

Author videos

Our author videos are a great place to start when introducing the shortlist. We have videos of the authors answering questions on each book, as well as reading the first few pages of each book. Who better than the authors themselves to tell your pupils about their books? You can [find all the shortlisted videos on our website](#).

As you read...

Here are a few activities to help spark the interest of your book group or reading group as you work your way through the shortlist.

Quick fire questions

Use the quick fire question PowerPoint (available to download from the Scottish Book Trust website) to encourage fun and lively debate on the three shortlisted titles. You can use these questions separately with each book, or use them to compare titles, or use them on a chapter you have recently read.

If working with a small group, you can reveal each question to the group on a whiteboard and give pupils 5 seconds to answer before moving on. For larger groups, divide the group into pairs and ask pupils to fire the questions quickly at each other. This would work well as a starter activity, to get pupils interacting and talking.

Hot seating

Hot seating is a great way to develop pupil understanding of a character's personality, actions and motives; and it is a thoroughly enjoyable activity too!

Each pupil assumes the role of a character from the chosen book, and in turn take the 'hot seat' (this can be a special chair, beanbag, or cushion). For some characters, we already know plenty about their background and experience. This game works really well for minor characters, where pupils have to improvise and be creative with their responses. The rest of the group asks questions of the character, and then another character takes a turn.

You can download a PowerPoint containing the hot seat questions from the Scottish Book Trust website, or ask pupils to come up with their own questions.

Contact the author

Does your group have a burning question about one of the books on the shortlist they just need answered? Tweet the questions to authors on behalf of pupils via your

school or library school Twitter account (or other social media account). Remember to tag [@scottishbktrust](#) and use the hashtag #ScotTeenBookPrize.

- [@PatienceAgbabi](#)
- [@susanwilsonbook](#)
- [@HarryCook](#)

Bookzilla

As a group, download the [Bookzilla app](#). This is Scottish Book Trust's reading app for teenagers. Pupils can get reading recommendations, challenge themselves with a reading dare and try something new. The Scottish Teenage Book Prize shortlist titles are listed on the app, as are the authors' recommended titles. Pupils can track their reading progress throughout the prize.

Get pupils to explore the different reading challenges and dares available on the app. Which dare do they want to set for the Scottish Teenage Book Prize? Or do they want to create their own?

Exploring setting

All three books on the shortlist this year create immersive and vivid worlds. This offers a great opportunity to chat about setting and world building. *The Infinity Files* is set on a number of different planets across the galaxy (as well as the library and spaceship), *The Infinite's* setting is a version of the present day and the Time Squad Centre in 2048, and *Fin & Rye & Fireflies* is set in contemporary Australia.

All the settings are removed from readers through either time, space or distance. Talk about the three different settings. Did pupils find them easy to visualise? Ask pupils to quickly draw each setting and then compare. Was there anything they imagined differently from each other? Why might that be?

Now ask pupils which of the settings they liked most, and which of the settings would they most like to visit? Are the answers to these questions the same or different? Why might that be?

Book Jenga

Book Jenga is a great way to get pupils talking about books, answering questions and having fun whilst playing Jenga too! Librarian Deena Wren introduced Scottish Book Trust to the wonders of book Jenga when she won our [Learning Professional Award](#).

You can use the lucky dip questions in appendix one for your book Jenga to encourage discussion around the shortlist, or you can use the more general questions in our [Book Jenga resource](#). Simply write the questions onto your Jenga blocks, and then begin to play! Pupils must read aloud the question on their block and answer it. In any game of Jenga, whoever topples the pile loses.

Get talking!

The three titles explore a variety of themes and issues. Here are some themes for each book, which groups can chat about and explore together:

- *The Infinite*: The environment, veganism, time-travel, climate change, cli-fi (climate fiction), friendship, neurodivergence, sport/running, self-care, nature, the future, bullying, prejudice, maths.
- *The Infinity Files*: Grief, war and conflict, space, friendship, resilience and self-confidence, conflict resolution, repatriation of artefacts, importance of libraries, identity.
- *Fin & Rye & Fireflies*: family, friendship and especially supportive friendships, relationships, change, mental health and wellbeing, trans rights, queer rights, loneliness, listening to others and learning.

Two of the books on this year's shortlist, *Fin & Rye & Fireflies* and *The Infinite*, contain themes for which you may want to offer pupils further support. *The Infinite* contains scenes bullying of a young person, by an adult and by peers. *Fin & Rye & Fireflies* contains scenes of homophobia and transphobia, and a conversation between two characters about another peer who died by suicide. Below are charities and organisations that offer further support and resources.

- [LGBT Youth Scotland](#)
- [Time for Inclusive Education \(TIE\)](#)
- [Stonewall UK](#)
- [Mermaids](#)
- [National Autistic Society](#)
- [SHOUT](#)
- [Childline](#)
- [RespectMe](#)
- [The Mix](#)
- [Youth Access](#)
- [YoungScot](#)
- [Wellbeing Scotland](#)

Vote

Now pupils have read the shortlisted books, remember to collect and [register pupils' votes on our website](#) before **Friday 25 March 2022** to make them count towards the national prize. The winner will be announced on Wednesday 4 May 2022.

Spice up voting

However you collect your votes, be sure to make it exciting! You could:

- Create a ballot box and place it in your classroom or library.
- Vote anonymously via a [doodle poll](#).
- Hide copies of the books around your space and give each pupil a sticky note to place inside the book.

Celebrate the shortlist

You have read the three shortlisted books with your group and voted for your favourite. Why not hold a celebration day to mark the end of the project?

Decorate your setting

Highlight all of the amazing work you and your pupils have been doing as part of the Scottish Teenage Book Prize by creating a display in your library, classroom or school. This is an opportunity to showcase your work to others in your setting!

- You can display the three shortlisted books with pupil comment cards and add recommendations that have been made through group discussion.
- Pupils can create alternative cover posters for the three titles. These can be added to your display.
- Pupils can illustrate and write a postcard from the perspective of one of the characters. Who would they send the postcard to and why?
- Pupils can add their favourite quotes and phrases from the books to the wall display.
- Add creativity to your display by writing a review or summary of each book in Haiku form. This will really challenge your pupils to condense the story.

Hold a Book Bistro

The Book Bistro was an event idea created by staff at [St Andrew's and St Bride's High School](#). One room in the school was converted into a comfortable café for a day. Pupils were given tickets to attend the bistro, and enjoyed reading and being served hot chocolate and nibbles by staff members. It created a real buzz throughout the school and excitement around reading.

Create your own Book Bistro. Convert your room or library into a cosy reading den with the addition of blankets, cushions and fairy lights. Make the bistro extra special by serving yummy hot drinks or snacks and allowing pupils time out of lessons (if you are able) to enjoy the bistro.

Watch the winner announcement

The winner will be announced on **Wednesday 4 May 2022** via our website and social media channels. Gather your pupils together to watch the announcement.

You could make this event extra enjoyable by making it a cinematic experience with popcorn, comfy chairs, bringing in blankets and cushions and making the room as dark as possible.

Continue your journey

All of the fantastic work you have been doing as part of the Scottish Teenage Book Prize can form part of your Secondary School Reading Inspiration submission for the [First Minister's Reading Challenge](#). We would love you to sign up and hear all about what your group has been up to!

Benefits of registering your group are:

- Order group passports for your classes or groups. Group passports are wall charts pupils can use to log their reading.
- Access our huge range of downloadable learning resources and interactive games.
- Apply for Creative Workshops funding, which allows you to bring a creative practitioner to work with your group.
- Submit your stories for a chance to win an award and attend our Celebration event.

Just visit the [First Minister's Reading Challenge website](#) to sign up and continue your reading journey.

Reading recommendations

All three of our authors have given reading recommendations if your pupils enjoyed their title.

- Patience Agbabi recommends:
 - Any books by Christopher Edge, including *The Jamie Drake Equation* and *The Many Worlds of Albie Bright*
 - *Show Us Who You Are* by Elle McNicoll
 - *Moojag and the Auticode Secret* by N.E. McMorran and Chiaki Kamikawa
- S.M. Wilson recommends:
 - *Six Wakes* by Mur Lafferty
 - *Goldilocks* by Laura Lam

- *One Of Us Is Lying* by Karen M. McManus (and other titles in the series)
- *The S.T.A.G.S* series by M.A. Bennett
- *The Inheritance Games* by Jennifer Lynn Barnes
- Harry Cook recommends:
 - *Like A Love Story* by Abdi Nazemian
 - *Running with Lions* by Julian Winters
 - *What If It's Us?* By Becky Albertallo and Adam Silvera
 - *Tell the Wolves I Am Home* by Carol Rifka Brunt
 - *The House of Impossible Beauties* by Joseph Cassara

Encourage pupils to share their own recommendations of books on a similar theme they enjoyed.

Following this, you can encourage pupils to create a recommendation station in your library or classroom. This could be a library display or a wall display, or perhaps you could share pupils' recommendations on your school social media platforms.

Remember to tag @ScottishBkTrust and use #ScotTeenBookPrize.