

First Minister's Reading Challenge in schools 2020–21

The First Minister's Reading Challenge encourages pupils to read for pleasure and helps develop a culture of reading in schools and communities across Scotland. This national initiative is funded by the Scottish Government to help schools, public libraries and community groups to build and sustain reading cultures which encourage young people to develop a life-long love of reading.

Schools that take part have access to resources, training and funding opportunities, and can submit an entry for one of our annual national awards. Despite the school year being disrupted by lockdown, many schools still submitted entries to the Reading Challenge award categories.



93%

of pupils read for pleasure more



92%

of pupils understand the value of reading for pleasure better



89%

of learning professionals said the Reading Challenge helped them develop new techniques to support reading for pleasure

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The Reading Challenge provides a vehicle for driving forward improvements in our reading culture. It provides a structure and momentum to help us continue to enthuse and inspire our whole school community.

Learning professional

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I watch children willingly take books out and settle down on beanbags and other soft furnishings to read undisturbed or talk to each other, specifically about their reading.

Learning professional

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73%

of learning professionals noticed a change in the level of reading for pleasure for reluctant readers



100%

of learning professionals said the Reading Challenge helped them encourage pupils to read for pleasure



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A child completed two group passport sheets with the books she had read on her own and made the comment: 'I had more journeys with the million words I read than I would have done if I had a million pounds to spend.'

Learning professional

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89%

of learning professionals said the Reading Challenge helped their school integrate reading for pleasure into the curriculum

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Our young readers have had a flying start to their reading journey. We are so proud of them!

Learning professional

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94%

of learning professionals said the Reading Challenge helped them feel empowered to encourage reading for pleasure

The Reading Challenge in lockdown

Scottish Book Trust has a range of learning resources, lesson plans and activities to help schools engage with the Reading Challenge.

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The huge amount the children read during lockdown and the enjoyment which we got from reading together online and sharing our thoughts and opinions was fantastic.

Learning professional

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Putting together an entry about our year in lockdown, we realised that we had done more than we thought. Pupils told me how much they enjoyed reading during lockdown, some not previously the biggest of readers.

Learning professional

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83%

of learning professionals said the Reading Challenge helped them enthuse pupils impacted by lockdown