



Read Manchester Newsletter January 2021

Welcome to our first newsletter of 2021. Read Manchester is continuing to develop new partnerships and programmes to promote reading for pleasure and its associated literacy and health and wellbeing benefits. Catch up with our latest news on book gifting, Hungry Little Minds and our ACE funded programme, Connecting Stories.

Read Manchester Book gifting programme

Ensuring that children have access to books has been a priority for us since the first lockdown in March 2020. Read Manchester has now gifted books to 31,000 children through various programmes and worked with a variety of partners to reach those children and families that are most in need. For our Christmas appeal we joined up with over 60 different foodbanks and community organisations to gift 7,000 brand new books. Through our partnership with the Manchester Children's Book Festival we secured 2,000 books from publishers and were generously supported by J Hopkins (Ltd) with a financial donation.



The fund-raising appeal in support of Read Manchester by the Manchester Central Library Development Trust is still [live](#) as we hope to continue with this essential strand of our work.

Read about the logistics of embarking on such large scale book gifting [here!](#)

Reading map

In 2020, Read Manchester launched a Reading Map resource in partnership with Transport for Greater Manchester. The design is based on the iconic Manchester Metrolink but the twist is that children will find a new book to read in place of every Metrolink stop!



Every Manchester school child in year 5 and 6 received a copy of the map. The map has also been very popular amongst featured authors who have sent in photos from all over the world! Check out the #ReadMCR hashtag on Twitter to view some of these.

We are now gathering feedback from schools. If your school received copies of the map, please [fill in this short survey](#) to give us feedback. By doing this, you will be entered into a competition to **win a complete set of the books from the map for your school!** Read Manchester have three of these prizes available.

Connecting Stories

We are delighted to announce the launch of **Connecting Stories**. The Arts Council England-funded project increases children and young people's access to literary experiences and books through a calendar of fully-funded virtual events and activities. We are starting this month by organising virtual author visits to schools in Manchester. These virtual author visits will link into an exciting community-wide creative writing competition starting in February.

In the spring, we will be planning a series of exhibitions and working with national publishers to showcase the children's work. There will also be opportunities to receive book donations and other resources for schools taking part.

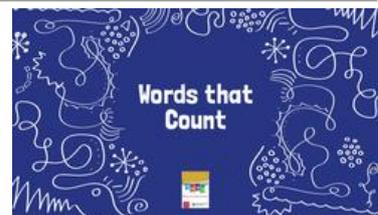
[Click here](#) for more general information about our Connecting Stories project.



Words that Count

We are excited to launch [Words that Count](#) as part of Experian's United for Financial Health programme, which looks to support the financial recovery and wellbeing of young people in Manchester affected by COVID-19. Words that Count is a financial literacy campaign for young people aged 16-24 which aims to help young people understand their personal finances better. The campaign shares advice on topics including first jobs, paying bills, managing money and council tax, available for free on wordsforlife.org.uk. There are several short promotional animated videos as well as video content from Love Island's Danny Williams, Biggs Chris and Tom Walker who share their top tips on saving money.

Each week there is a chance to win £100 by taking our quizzes around the different money topics, and more videos over the coming weeks.



Hungry Little Minds

Hungry Little Minds and Manchester Art Gallery were delighted to release 'The Gruffalos Child' video at the beginning of December, which was very timely given the Manchester snow! We are looking forward to our second stories, 'With my Mummy' and 'With my Daddy' in the next few weeks, which is all about special family relationships. You can see these wonderful stories on the [Read Manchester Facebook page](#).

For Christmas, Hungry Little Minds and the gallery offered a Zoom session to all families, where we read 'The Snowman', sang some songs about Christmas bells and snowflakes and explored ice, foil and paper as part of sensory play time. We have also been really happy to be a part of Manchester Libraries story times on a Tuesday morning during the autumn.

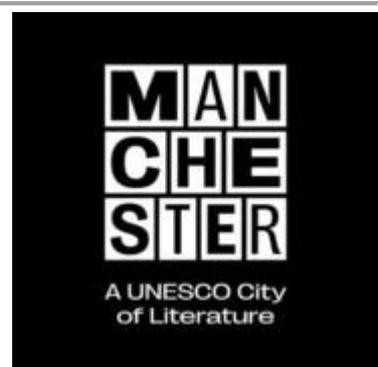
Working in conjunction with Read Manchester, we gifted 1000 books and activity packs to homeless families across Manchester in time for Christmas and are now working to get story books to the children's centres for outreach workers use, when lockdown lifts.

We are thrilled to now have our page on the Read Manchester website, which can be found [here](#). Please do check back to see any updates or events that may be taking place.



Manchester - A UNESCO City of Literature

Our friends at Manchester City of Literature have shared this video about why Manchester deserves the UNESCO designation of City of Literature. Read Manchester and libraries are a key part of this. Watch [here](#). They also have a [new website](#) with a What's On listing for events, readings and activities in Manchester.



Family Reading 'Share a Story' Course

The Family Learning team from MAE have worked with Read Manchester to develop a six week course for parents looking to develop their story sharing skills. *Share a Story* is an online course for parents to pass on and enjoy the wonderful benefits of book sharing with their children. It is aimed at the parents of children aged 3-7 years and seeks to help parents to discover how books and stories can spark a child's imagination and interest through trying out fun activities together.

For more information, please contact Anne Jacobsen, anne.jacobsen@manchester.gov.uk or parents can sign up to the course [here](#).



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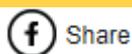
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