

The Reading Tree Challenge

Teacher Guidelines

There are lots of ways you and your students can enjoy this challenge.

First, here are some tips on which resources to use depending on your reading goals and practicalities within school.

Find out which resource works best for you

You may consider using a combination of options depending on your school, class and students.

Option 1:

- ❖ Do you have space in your classroom or school to display an A3 poster?
- ❖ Are you keen to promote reading for pleasure and discussions about books among a class or large group of students?
- ❖ **The A3 poster and accompanying leaf template** is best suited for you and your students to complete the challenge
- ❖ If you have lots of enthusiastic readers then your tree will soon be covered in leaves. You may need more than one poster!

Option 2:

- ❖ Would you like students to work individually on their reading goals?
- ❖ Do you have students who are happy to read regularly and read more than two books a term?
- ❖ **The A4 poster and accompanying leaf template** is best suited for your students to take part in the challenge.
- ❖ Which student can fill up their own reading tree with the most leaves? The students may like to complete the larger leaves as well and stick them up in the classroom or give to a friend as a recommendation.

Option 3:

- ❖ Are you short of space in the classroom?
- ❖ Do you have students who are reluctant to read books or prefer to read more slowly?
- ❖ **The large leaf template** is best suited for your needs.
- ❖ Can you decorate your school with lots of lovely leaves filled with book recommendations?

Aim

The challenge is to **cover the bare branches and trunk of the Reading Tree** with lots of leaves showcasing all the books that the students have read in a set time frame either as a group or by themselves.

Method

Print out the resources that work best for you, and hand them out to students. For example, if you are doing a class challenge then show the class the A3 poster and pin it up somewhere in the classroom. Let students **cut out a leaf** – or for younger children, provide them with a pre-cut leaf.

Then task them with asking a teacher, such as their class teacher, school librarian, a subject teacher or even the head teacher for **a book recommendation**. Ideally the teacher would spend a few moments chatting with each student to discover possible likes and interests so that the recommendation is encouraging for the student to pursue. The student needs to locate a copy, **read the book** and then fill in their leaf with the relevant details including their star rating. **The leaf can be attached to the poster**. Fantastic!

Why don't you give out another leaf and encourage your students to ask for a recommendation from someone else, maybe a classmate or different teacher?

Please do help students locate their book in the school library if they are having difficulty with sourcing a copy.

You may want to compile a list of books from different genres and topics that you and your colleagues can refer to for making recommendations. If you have one, your school librarian will be a great source of ideas.

Don't forget!

Celebrate achievement by awarding a certificate to every student that has worked successfully on this challenge. Maybe a student has made a real effort with their reading, taken the time to make recommendations to their friends or supported the overall idea of reading as a community. You might have a student that has done all three!

Last but not least.....

The first 50 schools to register for the challenge through the online form will receive a free set of each resource!

If you have completed this challenge in your school by **Friday 27 November 2020**, you are invited to take a photo of your posters and leaves and send it in with the name of your school to competitions@literacytrust.org.uk.

You will be entered into a prize draw to win a box of great books for your school!

You are, of course, welcome to complete the challenge without entering the prize draw. You can plan it for a different time frame that suits you and we'll keep the resources available for you to access throughout the year.

If you have any queries about the challenge then don't hesitate to contact us at competitions@literacytrust.org.uk.

See the attached terms and conditions for the prize draw.

Why reading for pleasure is so important

We've long known that a love of reading and writing can help children flourish at school and go on to succeed at work. But we now know that reading and writing for enjoyment can also play a vital role in helping children lead happy and healthy lives.

Furthermore, our survey we ran during lockdown proved that **reading has provided refuge in this difficult time**, supporting children's mental wellbeing and enabling them to dream about the future.

- 3 in 5 (59.3%) children and young people told us during lockdown that reading makes them feel better.
- 3 in 10 (31.6%) said that reading helps them when they feel sad because they cannot see their family and friends.
- Reading is encouraging half of children (50.2%) to dream about the future.

Our research, [Mental wellbeing, reading and writing](#), found that children who enjoy reading and writing in their free time have significantly better mental wellbeing than their peers who don't.

