

Any book that helps a child to form a habit of reading, to make reading one of his deep and continuing needs, is good for him.

–Maya Angelou

With this thought in mind British Council would like to present a unique reading programme called the Reading Challenge to you.

READING CHALLENGE

The Reading Challenge is a massive reading promotion programme for children and young people in the UK. It is conceptualised by The Reading Agency in collaboration with the Arts Council England and the BBC and now runs in libraries and schools all over the world. In the Reading Challenge children are challenged to read a range of books and are encouraged to complete the challenge with an exciting range of incentives and activities. Since its launch in 1999, it has become UK's biggest promotion of children's reading. Around 839,000 children took part in last year's programme borrowing an amazing 20 million books from the libraries. The programme is now being run in over 30 countries like Spain, Thailand, Malaysia, Portugal, Kazakhstan, Singapore, Oman, Romania, France, Greece, Vietnam, Columbia, Venezuela, Sri Lanka and India.

OBJECTIVES

The aim of the challenge is to get children to read a wide variety of books from the specially selected list on different themes. The challenge inspires children to read for fun, pleasure and personal achievement. It helps them explore new titles by different authors and talk about them with their friends. They enjoy the freedom to choose whatever they want to read from the wealth of books that is on offer for them. The element of challenge gives them an incentive to read, and a sense of achievement on finishing them. Whether the child is just beginning to pick up books, or is an avid reader already, the Reading Challenge will fire up their imagination.

The Reading Challenge is great fun for every child and it also gives children a real sense of achievement. What's more, research shows children who take part get a head start in the classroom.

- They have a more enthusiastic attitude to studies and are more keen and ready to learn
- They have enhanced confidence and self-esteem by completing the Challenge and receiving their medals and certificates

HOW IT WORKS

Every child who joins the challenge has to read **six** books within a span of six weeks. The child will then participate in some activities based on the theme and complete the challenge. If they complete the challenge successfully, they will receive a certificate at the end of it and all exceptional performances will be rewarded with a medal.

- The essence of the Reading Challenge is '**read a book in a week**'.
- The Reading Challenge is theme based. There are different themes and there are books on each of these themes.
- The books are divided into two categories – Younger and Older
- The younger collection is suitable for children in the age group of **5 to 8 years** and the older collection for **9 to 13 years**.
- Children will have to read books from the collection of books for their respective age groups. They can choose the books they want to read from a wide range of books on the theme.
- There are specially designed workshops and activities for children in the two age groups. The children will have to attend the workshops and activities designated for them.
- On completion of the challenge they will receive certificates and medals from The UK Reading Agency and British Council

TESTIMONIALS

(From children and teachers in India and UK)

“I would like to attend such programmes in future too.” – **Student, Blue Mountain school Ooty**

“This boy is addicted to internet I was particular in making him move towards reading books which he does only at school. The moment he is out of the school, he stops touching the book. But now I could see him reading more. All thanks to the Reading Challenge Programme.” – **Parent from Chennai**

“It was a great pleasure being the part of Reading Challenge Programme. thanks a lot for giving this opportunity to my kid.” – **Mr A M Mohammed Aashik (Parent) from Chennai**

“This year's Creepy House was a totally new experience and I would be eager to join it again. I read as many books as I could. Each of them had a different flavour. I enjoyed the workshops too. Thank you British Council.” – **Suroma Nag, participant, 11 years old**

“I enjoyed the programme thoroughly. When I first came to know about the workshops, I thought they will be boring. After having attended the workshops, I now know they were awesome. I look forward to joining the challenge next year as well” – **Kahf Hussain, participant, 12 years old**

“Creepy House did make a difference! The time bound schedule forced them to finish a book in a week's time. Apart from the reading, the interaction between peer groups was what they looked forward to.” – **Parent of a 13 year old**

“This is the second year that my son is participating in the Reading Challenge. Nowadays children are so addicted to television and video games that they hardly read any books in their spare time. In such a scenario, British Council's effort is really praise worthy. These fun filled activities have brought children closer to the wonderful world of story books. I personally thank and congratulate British Council for their effort” – **Parent of a 7 year old.**

“Children no longer sleep in the bus; they read.” – **Nandita Mishra, Vice Principal, KIIT International School, Bhubaneswar**

“How many books have you read? I've read 75. I can't wait to continue reading books!!!! This week I've had the flu, trust it to be on holidays but I quite enjoyed it because I managed to read lots and lots. Hope you enjoy reading as much as I do!” – **Child aged 11 from Stevenage**

“Reading is the most important thing in the world. Even more important than Christmas even if Christmas is my favourite time of year!!!” – **Child, aged 8, from London**

“My son finds reading difficult and would rather do anything else than pick up a book. This reading challenge has REALLY helped to encourage him to read over the holidays and hopefully his new-found confidence will continue into the new school year.” – **Mum of 7 year-old from Essex**