




# LIFELONG READERS

**A European Reading Promotion Framework  
For Primary School Librarians, Educators &  
Administrators**

[www.lifelongreaders.org](http://www.lifelongreaders.org)



This project has been carried out with the support of the European Community and the Lifelong Learning Programme. The content of this project does not necessarily reflect the position of the European Community, nor does it involve any responsibility on the part of the European Community.



This publication was prepared by CARDET and its partners as part of the project “Lifelong Readers: A European Reading Promotion Framework for Primary School Librarians, Educators, and Administrators (LiRe)”, [Project Number: 518250-LLP-1-2011-1-CY-COMENIUS-CMP].

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**Lifelong Learning Programme**

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**LiRe Motto**

*A lifelong learner is first and foremost a  
lifelong reader*



## Introduction to the Lifelong Readers Framework

A lifelong learner is first and foremost a lifelong reader. Lifelong Readers (LiRe) aims to provide school librarians, teachers, and school leaders with guidance and tools for encouraging children of ages 6-12 to develop lifelong reading habits. In specific, **the Lifelong Readers (LiRe) project aims:**

1. To convince stakeholders about the need to devote more time and effort to reading promotion and to place reading for pleasure at the centre of their policies, approaches and practices.
2. To provide stakeholders with guidance, training, and an array of tools for reading promotion in the primary school.
3. To initiate change by implementing reading promotion programmes in all participating countries.

To achieve these aims, the LiRe team has built a **reading promotion framework** which features:

1. Principles, strategies and approaches for promoting the joy of reading, building reading communities, and sustaining reading cultures;
2. Summary descriptions of successful reading promotion programs;
3. An extensive collection of reading promotion actions;
4. Reading promotion and reading habits evaluation tools;
5. An annotated catalogue of relevant resources.

All of the above can be openly accessed, and utilized for school-staff training, at the project's site: [www.lifelongreaders.org](http://www.lifelongreaders.org). This "abridged" version of the LiRe Framework introduces you to some of the most important parts of the framework, which have been condensed and localized for your convenience. After previewing this document, we highly recommend that you also visit our website, where you can find more than 100 proposed actions and activities, useful resources, and much more.

## What you should know about reading promotion

The *Teaching Reading in Europe* report (Eurydice Network, 2011) emphasizes that “In 2009, approximately one in five 15-year olds in the EU-27 countries had difficulties using reading for learning” (13). These numbers reflect the grim picture of literacy in European education which, of course, needs to be reversed, if Europe is to achieve its ambitious educational, social, political, and economical goals.

**A Love for Reading**  
*“The development of a love for reading is too important to be left to chance”*  
(Spiegel, 1981: 4)

The LiRe consortium asserts that high levels of reading literacy are directly correlated to positive stances towards reading and strong reading habits.

The 2006 PIRLS International Report firmly concludes that “In PIRLS 2001, and again in PIRLS 2006, students with the most positive attitudes toward reading had the highest reading achievement” (Mullis et al, 2006: 6). This direct correlation between strong reading habits and high reading skills outlines the motivation behind the Lifelong Readers (LiRe) project.

### Attributes of a lifelong reader

A lifelong learner is first and foremost a lifelong reader. Reading is perhaps the most essential life-skill, as it plays a decisive role in a person's social empowerment, professional success, and personal development. A lifelong reader is self-motivated, finds value and pleasure in reading, and thus reads, learns, and evolves throughout her/his lifetime. LiRe aspires to contribute to the effort of creating European schools that are populated by thousands of lifelong readers. As Atwell purports, this should be the central objective of language education: “And this is the goal: for every child to become a skilled, passionate, habitual, critical reader” (Atwell, 2007: 12).

Miller, who like Atwell is both an educator and researcher, describes the central attributes of her lifelong reading students: “You see, my students are not just strong, capable readers, they love books and reading. Building lifelong readers has to start here” (Miller, 2009: 4). The emphasis on finding enjoyment in reading is evident. Research suggests that pleasure in the reading experience itself is a key factor in motivating readers:

People who do not find reading pleasurable tend to view book reading the way most people view preparing an income tax return: it is hard to do, done under compulsion, and requires long blocks of uninterrupted time. Confident readers, in contrast, find reading effortless. They say that they pick up a book whenever

they have a few spare minutes and frequently carry books with them in case they have to wait in line. (Ross, 2005: 4)

Lockwood also highlights its importance: “Reading for pleasure is one very important and common manifestation of having a positive ‘attitude to reading’, which is another term frequently used in the research and writing in this area. Having a positive attitude to reading is obviously closely related to the concepts of ‘reading engagement’ and ‘reading motivation’” (Lockwood, 2008: 1).

Trying to explain why some people engage in leisure-time reading more than others, researchers and practitioners have pointed to the importance of reading motivation. Guthrie and Wigfield define reading motivation as “the individual’s personal goals, values and beliefs with regard to the topics, processes and outcomes of reading” and highlight its important role (2000: 405). Reading engagement is a wider term/attribute, which involves reading motivation but includes more than that. The OECD postulates that “engagement in reading” includes reading for pleasure, reading widely and attitude to reading (Kirsch et al, 2002). As Baker et al explain, when we say that someone is engaged in an activity we usually mean that s/he is involved at a deep level; some synonyms to this term would include absorbed, engrossed, interested, and involved (Baker et al, 2000: 2). According to the same researchers, students are engaged readers when they read frequently for interest, enjoyment and learning. As will be supported in the next section, having a “literate lifestyle,” being engaged in reading, or put more simply being a lifelong reader, has been shown to be the most important factor in reading achievement.



## The benefits of reading engagement/lifelong reading

The *Teaching Reading in Europe* report summarizes research findings about the importance and benefits of reading engagement:

It has been consistently shown that those who read more are better readers. With an increased amount of reading, reading ability improves, which in turn encourages more reading (Cunningham and Stanovich, 1998). Furthermore, Clark and Rumbold's meta-review (2006) showed that reading for pleasure is positively linked to text comprehension and grammar, breadth of vocabulary, greater self-confidence as a reader and pleasure of reading later in life. (Eurydice Network, 2011: 114)

Another report (Allan et al., 2005: 5) summarizes research findings regarding the benefits of reading for enjoyment:



Children who say that they enjoy reading and who read for pleasure in their own time do better at school. Reading for enjoyment is positively associated with reading attainment and with writing ability (OECD 2002). Pupils who read for pleasure also demonstrate a wider general

knowledge (Wells 1986), a better understanding of other cultures (Meek 1991), and more complex insights regarding human nature, motivations and decision-making (Cunningham and Stanovich 1998, Bruner 1996).

The OECD report *Reading for Change: Results from PISA 2000* concludes that the engaged reader can even overcome obstacles of low parental education and income:

- Being more enthusiastic about reading and being a frequent reader was more of an advantage on its own than having well-educated parents in good jobs.
- Finding ways to engage students in reading may be one of the most effective ways to leverage social change. (Kirsch et al, 2002: 3)

Krashen illustrates best the importance of reading engagement, and reading for pleasure in particular: "Those who do not develop the pleasure reading habit simply don't have a chance--they will have a very difficult time reading and writing at a level high enough to



deal with the demands of today's world" (Krashen 2004: x). The important benefits of reading engagement should be taken into serious account by schools and educators:

These benefits of engaged reading for achievement are real and cannot be explained away as an artefact of another factor. A range of predictive studies documents that engaged reading increases achievement when such factors as intelligence, home income, ethnicity, and school grades are statistically controlled. In other words, if teachers can enable students to become 'self-starters' as readers, they increase the children's chances of success in immediate and distant futures, and this benefit accrues for a wide range of students. (Baker et al, 2000: 9)



### **Schools, teachers and librarians who promote reading effectively**

Most contemporary texts seem to convert about the characteristics of successful reading promotion. Regardless of the methodology they use, most scholars seem to arrive in the same, or quite similar, conclusions. Miller argues that what needs to be done to achieve successful reading promotion should be "common sense" for experienced readers: "Anyone who calls herself or himself a reader can tell you that it starts with encountering great books, heartfelt recommendations, and a community of readers who share this passion" (Miller, 2009: 4).

It may sound as common sense, but in practice the overarching majority of schools and their staff place much more emphasis on other aspects of reading, such as testable and measurable reading skills. Miller comments: "When did reading become such a technocratic process that we lost the books and the children in the debate? I am convinced that if we show students how to embrace reading as a lifelong pursuit and not just a collection of skills for school performance, we will be doing what I believe we have

been charged to do: create readers” (2009: 4). Schools should strive simultaneously for both skill and motivation, as cognitive skills and reading motivation are mutually reinforcing and not alternatives (Kirsch et al, 2002). A language teacher that focuses only on teaching children how to read is failing her/his students.

According to Baker et al, three things that effective teachers know and do, especially for their disengaged or “reluctant” readers, are:

- to enhance students’ sense of **competence** by providing them with materials to read that are challenging yet manageable;
- to reinforce students’ sense of **autonomy** by encouraging them to choose books of personal interest;
- and to support students’ sense of **relatedness** by giving them the opportunity to discuss what they are reading with others. (2000: 10)


Krashen raises an even stronger voice:

Our problem in language education, as Frank Smith has pointed out, is that we have confused cause and effect. We have assumed that we first master language “skills” and then apply these skills to reading and writing. But that is not the way the human brain operates. Rather, reading for meaning, reading about things that matter to us, is the cause of literate language development. (Krashen, 2004: 150)

Providing students with opportunities to choose and read texts that are personally meaningful and important to them is a factor that keeps coming up in all texts about reading promotion. But in order for students to be able to do this, the teacher also needs to provide them with *time*; time for in-class, free, voluntary reading: “FVR, which

means reading because you want to. Free voluntary reading is what avid readers do every time they pick up a book to read for pleasure. The connection between voluntary reading and powerful literacy is that people learn to read by reading” (Ross, 2005: 4). A print-rich environment, as well as teachers and librarians who function as reading models are two factors that seem to move students towards successful FVR.





Taking into account the agreement of researchers on most aspects of effective reading promotion (Gambrell, 1996; Turner, 1997; Guthrie et al, 1996; Lockwood, 2008; Baker et al, 2000; McKechnie & Rothbauer, 2006) and in an attempt to produce a synthesis of important research findings, the LiRe consortium suggests the following comprehensive list of guidelines and strategies for a school teacher or librarian who strives to help children become lifelong readers:


### **A Teacher or School Librarian who promotes reading engagement**

1. Is a reading model and communicates daily her/his enthusiasm about reading
2. Is informed about and has read a high volume of quality texts for children and YA
3. Creates a print- and technology- rich classroom library to entice children to read
4. Organizes a reading environment where there is easy access to plenty of suitable texts (in print and on screen)
5. Promotes “light reading” as well (comics, magazines, popular print, on-line reading, etc.)
6. Encourages and enables students to choose texts that interest them
7. Helps students become familiar with books and other texts
8. Plans for social interaction and collaboration about books and reading: peer-to-peer recommendations, teaching and learning
9. Provides incentives that reflect the value of reading
10. Enhances student autonomy: motivating activities which are open and authentic tasks that promote learner choice and control
11. Has high expectations and encourage students to do so as well
12. Ensures that pupils are aware of what they are doing and how and why they are doing it
13. Establishes ‘real world interaction’
14. Achieves expertise in teaching reading and helps children build the word-level foundation for engaged reading
15. Helps children who experience reading difficulties
16. Fosters reading for learning
17. Provides sufficient time for in-class/library reading
18. Reads aloud to children
19. Builds towards coherent instruction
20. Facilitates reading instruction through school-wide coordination
21. Fosters home and community connections to support children’s reading
22. Avoids giving a negative message about reading



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### **A Lifelong Reader**

*A lifelong reader is self-motivated, finds value and pleasure in reading, and thus reads, learns, and evolves throughout her/his lifetime*

### **Report on Teaching Reading in Europe**

*“It has been consistently shown that those who read more are better readers. With an increased amount of reading, reading ability improves, which in turn encourages more reading”*

(Cunningham and Stanovich, 1998)

### **The Goal**

*“And this is the goal: for every child to become a skilled, passionate, habitual, critical reader—as novelist Robertson Davies put it, to learn how to make of reading ‘a personal art’”*

(Atwell, 2007: 12)



## Some successful reading promotion programmes



**PROGRAMME TITLE:** Summer Reading Programme.

**PROGRAMME ORGANISER(S):** Junior Certificate School Programme (JCSP).

**Time & Place:** Summer Holidays, 30 School Libraries.

**Target Group(s):** 800 post primary school students.

**Description:**



The Summer Reading Programme was introduced to 30 Irish post-primary schools in 2011. Its general aim was to support student reading during the summer holidays and to combat the “Summer Slide” effect that has been evident in students learning. JCSP students across all Project School Libraries were encouraged and facilitated to borrow books from their school library over the summer months. A number of Project libraries ran additional specialized summer activity programmes, often in conjunction with other agencies and support groups e.g.

local public libraries, local youth organisations, feeder Primary schools. 800 students took part in the programme, borrowing 3500 books. School Librarians ensured that the books selected by the students were appropriate to the reading age, according to their General Reading Test results. Students were encouraged to discuss, write about and report on the books they read - with their family, their friends and in library class on their return to school. Summer Book Reviews were gathered for display on school library notice boards, for inclusion in school/library newsletters, etc. In many schools the parents of students participating in the Summer Reading Programme were informed in advance about the Programme and encouraged to support their sons/daughters in their summer reading activities. Parents were made aware of when the school library would be open over the summer months and were also asked to encourage their child to join or use their local public library over the summer.

**Objectives:**

General:

To support students’ reading during the summer months.

To encourage parental involvement in students reading.

Specific:

To combat the “Summer Slide” effect of students reading attainment.  
To create cohesion between schools and educational services.  
To provide exciting and up to date reading material for young people.

### **Scheme of Reading Promotion Actions & Activities:**

1. Students reading attainment assessed by Librarian using the GRT (General Reading Test)
2. Students given a book bag and selection of appropriate reading material provided by school library.
3. Students select between 6-8 books to read during the summer months.
4. School Library is opened on specific dates and Librarian available to aid students in their progress.

After the summer, students present their project work, if they have chosen to complete it, and return books.

### **Results / Indicators of Success:**

The Summer Reading Programme was seen as a great success, with one Librarian commenting:

*“I think it’s one of the best initiatives I have done and I am incredibly proud of the work the students have put into their reading over the summer”*

One librarian reported that the mother of one of her Lithuanian students called to the school library over the summer months to borrow additional books for her son – who was spending the summer in Lithuania. He had asked his mother to post the books out to him.



Teachers noticed in the students that participated that they were mentally ready to return to school.

Parents were surprised by the amount of reading being undertaken by their children: *"I can't get my feet under the table with all the books John brought home".*

One of the students commented:

*"I went to the public library every second week because I needed to get the next books [in the series] to find out what happened."*

## **CONCLUSIONS:**

### **(WHAT WORKED WELL AND WHY)**

There were a number of key factors that led to the success of this programme. The first was incorporating parental involvement into the reading programme. This ensured that student would continue to read during the summer holidays. It was important that the students were assessed at the beginning of the programme, so appropriate reading material could be provided. Following on from this it was important to have a wide variety of age appropriate texts so the students could choose their own reading material. The opening hours of the school library were important in order for students to access additional reading material.

## **LINKS TO FURTHER MATERIAL:**

JCSP Programme

### **Building Lifelong Readers**

*"Building lifelong readers has to start here. Anyone who calls herself or himself a reader can tell you that it starts with encountering great books, heartfelt recommendations, and a community of readers who share this passion" (Miller, 2009: 4)*



**PROGRAMME TITLE:** Coordinated Whole-School Reading Promotion Programme.

**Description Created by LiRe Partner Institution:** University of Worcester

**Time & Place:** January 2011 – present.

**Target Group(s):** Years 1-6.

**Description:**

Following a satisfactory OFSTED (Office for Standards in Education) inspection September 2010, the senior management team was re-organised and a senior member of staff given the role of Literacy coordinator with a responsibility for raising standards of attainment in reading and writing. The OFSTED report (2011) stated that “Pupils’ attainment in reading and mathematics is average in most year groups but lower in writing, particularly for boys.”



The Literacy coordinator’s approach was based on developing a reading culture within the school, whereby pupils, in particular boys, would take a more active approach in their reading and in turn, read for pleasure and enjoyment. This involved creating a welcoming and stimulating reading environment, giving pupils access to a wide range of quality reading materials, banding books according to

reading levels, revamping the school library, organising trips to see authors and discuss the books that they had written, parent workshops and pupil interviews to explore their views on reading. In short, reading became a priority in the school, something that evoked enjoyment and pleasure. Pupils became secure in their choices and used books to deepen their understanding and extend their knowledge. Reading for pleasure was given a high profile throughout the school with a new school library for parents, pupils and the Children’s Centre being opened by a leading children’s author.

**Objectives:**

- To foster a love of reading
- To raise the profile of reading within the school and wider community
- To raise standards of attainment in reading
- To encourage a willingness to read for pleasure
- To encourage confident, enthusiastic readers



### Scheme of Reading Promotion Actions & Activities:

- Library refurbished and relocated centrally – open to pupils, parents and the children’s centre
- Borrowing system set up for children, parents and Children’s Centre
- Key Stage 1 and 2 books banded according to national reading recovery levels, enabling pupils to choose from a selection appropriate to reading age
- Opening of the new library by celebrated children’s author Kaye Umansky
- Home readers banded according to national reading recovery levels
- School visits to see popular children’s authors, including Jacqueline Wilson, Jeremy Strong, Cathy Hopkins, Philip Ardagh, Ian Whybrow, Francesca Simon
- Staff INSET (in-service training) to explain and discuss promotion of reading and disseminate information on book bands
- Teacher’s favourite author/book board displayed centrally
- Pupils contribute wish lists of books they would like to see housed in the new library
- Focused guided reading sessions with an emphasis on discussion and understanding of the texts. During this time, pupils regularly discuss their favourite books and authors
- Interviews with authors
- Visits to the theatre to see George’s Marvelous Medicine and Jungle Book
- Celebration of Roald Dahl day and World Book day
- Parent workshops for every year group R – year 6
- Implementation of ‘Irresistible Learning’ enabled staff to develop ideas around core texts and to plan activities relating to pupils’ interests

This culminated in a series of pupil interviews to evaluate the successes of the reading programme and to gain further insights into the enjoyment of reading. In addition, parents and staff were able to express their views and opinions on the promotion of reading within the school.



## Results / Indicators of Success:

The following results demonstrate the improvement of reading skills:

Key Stage 2 SATs results English 2009 – 76% level 4+ 18% level 5  
English 2011 – 83% level 4+ 38% level 5 (reading 90% Level 4+ 58% level 5)

From pupil, parent and staff interviews, the following indicators were noted:

- Increased use of and access to school library
- Enthusiasm for reading across the school
- Pupils choosing a wider range of reading materials
- Pupils' ability to discuss books and authors improved
- An increased willingness to read for pleasure
- Pupils' perceptions of themselves as confident readers
- Pupils accessing a wider variety of reading material

Typical quotes from pupils included:



"Instead of switching on the TV...I get a book. Sometimes TV is a bit boring but with a book...it drags you in and catches your attention."

"I've never read a long book on my own before but since we had the library I have...Horrid Henry. I love those books."

"Each book becomes easier every time I read a new one...I know which ones I will be able to read on my own."

"I read every night to my mom and I also read to myself when I wake up

early...I love choosing new books from the library."

"I like books because sometimes with the films, they miss the best bits out."

"I read Goodnight Mr. Tom and The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas because we were doing a topic on World War II."

"The library is looked after and there is a system. We know which books we could read because they are all in sections."

"I'm a good reader – I was on green and I've moved up to orange – it means I'm getting better."

"I have read 6 chapter books and I am on to a really long one now. It's got about 100 pages."

"I like it because there are very good books to choose – lots of funny books."

"I like going to the library because it is fun, there are so many different books. You get to read them with your mom or sister or brother."

"You can get loads and loads of books."

“It helps with our writing. It gives us inspiration and we can steal, rob and magpie ideas to use in our own stories.”

## **CONCLUSIONS: (WHAT WORKED WELL AND WHY)**

The re-location and re-organisation of the library was a key factor in raising the profile of reading across the school. All of the pupils interviewed felt that the library was easier to navigate, held a wide selection of reading material and reflected their interests. They



were all familiar with the book banding system and felt that they were able to select books that matched their reading abilities. They liked the fact that the library was well looked after and understood the benefits of a loan system. They stated that the sofas and bean bags in the library enhanced the reading area and believed that the computers offered the opportunities

to research particular authors and books. In addition, parents commented that the library had contributed to the reading culture within the school and that their children had increased opportunities to visit the library and borrow books that were relevant to their particular tastes. Both parents and pupils applauded the fact that they were able to choose their own books rather than read the book given to them by teachers.

Pupils' involvement in choosing the reading material to be housed in the school library was another important factor in the success of the programme. They were actively involved and engaged in all aspects of the programme. Pupils felt valued as readers and had opportunities to discuss their favourite authors with teachers and parents. Enid Blyton, Dick King Smith, Michael Morporgo, Jacqueline Wilson, Adam Blade, Andy Stanton were all cited as favourite authors. The availability and increased numbers of these reading books in the library has contributed to pupils' willingness to read for pleasure.

Engagement of all staff in the project served to promote reading across the school, as did involvement of parents through workshops tailored to their particular year group. Making reading for pleasure visible was particularly effective in raising the profile of reading and in encouraging pupils to read for pleasure. All members of staff contribute on a regular basis to the staff reading board which is displayed centrally in order that

pupils recognize that teachers and other adults within the school read for pleasure. Of the parents interviewed, all believed that the school was developing an effective reading culture and praised the fact that the school was actively encouraging children to read for pleasure.

The positioning of reading for pleasure as central to the school's policy agenda ensured that all staff were fully engaged and gave them the incentive and opportunities to develop ideas creatively around quality texts. They were able to explore a wider variety of texts and use pupil preferences as a basis for their teaching whilst extending their own knowledge of children's literature.

Reading promotion events, including author visits and book focus days have enabled pupils and parents to widen their knowledge of children's literature, thus giving them access to a variety of reading material and the opportunity to discover new authors.

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#### LINKS TO FURTHER MATERIAL:

[http://www.thegrid.org.uk/learning/primary\\_strategy/inclusion/wave3/documents/ks\\_1-2\\_levels\\_bk\\_bnds.doc](http://www.thegrid.org.uk/learning/primary_strategy/inclusion/wave3/documents/ks_1-2_levels_bk_bnds.doc)

<http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/>

#### **Reading Skills AND Engagement**

*“Teachers place great emphasis not just on children acquiring specific reading skills but also on promoting engagement and pleasure in reading and they know what to do when a child does not seem motivated to read”*

(Lockwood, 2008: 9)

Things you can do to turn your school into a reading community





## RARE BOOK HUNTING

### Objectives

- Children to develop stances and habits in relation to libraries.
- To become familiar with library spaces and their usage.
- Children to explore the characteristics of books using all their senses.
- Children to interact within reading communities, playing, communicating, and discussing book and reading related issues.

### Setting, materials and preparation

- Place: Class library, school or community library.

### Step-by-Step Description

- Each student/pair or group of students receives a piece of paper that describes a “rare book” to be hunted throughout the library.
- They then explore all areas of the library, looking for their “rare book”; this could be a book that:
  - Smells really nice
  - Is edible
  - Makes us feel warm
  - Is emotionally touching
  - Is happy
  - Is sad

### Sources

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## BOOK CROSSING & BOOK SWAPPING

### Objectives

- To engage children in reading through open and authentic activities.
- To develop reading communities and enhance the school culture.

### Setting, materials and preparation

- Setting: All school premises.
- Materials: Plastic, transparent wallets for books, cards or notepads for comments, tables and signs for book-swapping point.

### Step-by-Step Description

- **BOOK SWAPPING:** A book-swapping point is set up in the school playground, which is run by group of older students. On specifies, regular days and times, students can bring a book to school that they no longer want and swap in with someone else.
- **BOOK CROSSING:** Books are put in plastic transparent wallets and left in random places on school premises for children to find and read. Students can take books home to read but have to return them and leave them somewhere in school for the next person to find. Children who find and read a “Lost Reading Book” write a couple of sentences about the book and leave their comments in the plastic wallet for the next reader who will find it.

### Sources

National Literacy Trust ([www.literacytrust.org.uk](http://www.literacytrust.org.uk))

Lockwood, M. (2008). *Promoting Reading for Pleasure in the Primary School*. London: Sage Publications.

## MULTILINGUAL MONTH/WEEK

### Objectives

- To demonstrate the value of reading materials in other languages.
- To motivate and engage multilingual families in reading.
- To enhance the school's reading culture and develop reading communities.

### Setting, materials and preparation

- Setting: All school premises.

### Step-by-Step Description

- Every week/day of the “Multilingual Month/Week” a different language that is relevant to the school is highlighted and celebrated through reading in this language.
- The school encourages families to help run the events and sends a programme home to raise cultural awareness among all families.
- Extracts of popular books, posters, newspapers and magazines in diverse languages are displayed in the reception area, in classrooms, the school library and elsewhere in school.
- The school library creates special reading corners with multilingual materials and organizes relevant activities.
- Families help translate reading-promotion slogans.

### Sources

Osborne, S., Strong, J. & Torsi, S. (2008). *Reading Connects Family Involvement Toolkit*. London: National Literacy Trust.





## A READING DERBY

### Objectives

- To improve boys' reading habits and behaviour, by providing positive male role models.
- To attend to boys' reading interests.

### Setting, materials and preparation

- Place: School library or other room at the school
- Materials: Two books (one for each of the football stars to present to the children), a decibel measurer, PowerPoint presentation with a football stadium, the flags and the symbols of the sport clubs, a scoreboard for the results like at a football stadium, and of course with the covers of the two books that will be presented.

### Step-by-Step Description

1. Invite two sports stars. Football fans have the possibility to witness great football derbies, but this time it will be Reading Derby.
2. Invite a well-known sport journalist as presenter of the derby.
3. Each of the two football stars selects or receives a book to present to the children.
4. In three rounds, the two football players compete against each other. They first present the book and read a part they selected themselves. In the second round, they explain why they recommend the book, and in the third round there are three surprise questions by the presenter to the sports stars: about their favorite book, their beloved reading place, and why reading is important.
5. After Each round, the children are allowed to clap, tramp, yell etc. A special machine measures the decibels of the children's applause. The football star who receives more decibels is the winner.
6. And of course the winner of the Reading Derby receives a cup. In addition, there is a lottery where a child may receive a T-Shirt from the one football club another from the other football club. At the end, football stars give autographs.
7. The Reading Derby runs under the Motto: "Football is fun. Reading too".

### Sources

<http://www.kirango.at/de/veranstaltungen/kalender/1503>

## INTEREST BAGS WITH PARENTS AT SCHOOL

### Objectives

- Children to develop their storytelling and book-taking skills.
- Children to develop a reading culture, both on a personal and communal level.
- To motivate and inspire families to read themselves and encourage their children to do so too.
- To increase awareness of the essential parental contribution to children's early reading development.

### Setting, materials and preparation

- Setting: library, "Parents Room" if available at school or classroom
- Materials:
  - Six storybooks, one for each theme chosen.
  - "Interest bag" for each story containing props decided on and chosen by staff or parents.
  - A variety of card games, picture bingo, puppets, soft toys, bid books, drawing paper and crayons suitable to each story.
  - A folder containing a copy of the story, a prompt card for parents and a game to be given to each child to take home after each session.
  - Certificate of completion for each child and parent, to be presented at celebration at and of module.
- Preparation:
  - Teachers choose six themes, one per week e.g. food, clothes, myself, Halloween, animals etc.
  - A storybook is chosen for each theme e.g. *The Very Hungry Caterpillar*, by Eric Carle (Food).
  - Props for stories are prepared for "Interest bags" (e.g. puppets, soft toys, enlarged pictures etc.)
  - Activities are prepared for each story (e.g. jigsaws, sorting/matching games, picture bingo etc.)
  - Dates and times are decided for each session and parents are informed.
  - The initiative is explained to parents at a meeting; the content of and the reasons for the programme are outlined, the topics and objectives of the programme are discussed, roles and responsibilities are assigned.



## Step-by-Step Description

Parents assemble at appointed time and are invited to classroom when session is about to start

- Teacher introduces Interest bags (See above).
- Teacher models reading the story to the children and parents observe.
- Group work with parent participation follows. The children work in groups of four/five, e.g. on activities as follows.
  - Group one children draw a picture of the story and discuss it with parents;
  - Group two children discuss the story/retell/answer simple questions assisted by parents;
  - Group three children role-play, e.g. “Let’s go shopping” for food theme, etc.
- Parents remain at one station while children move between activities.
- After the forty-minute session ends, parents and children are thanked.
- They meet again in a week’s time. Six sessions take place in total.
- At the end of the sixth session, a small party is organized and certificates are awarded to both children and parents.
- Parents are encouraged to create, exchange and take home with them new interest bags to use with their children.

## Sources

St. Vincent’s Convent Primary School, St. Mary’s Road, Cork (Ireland).

### **Parental Involvement**

*“Time to read at home revealed a significant increase which would again suggest that reading for pleasure was being valued within the home environment ...anecdotal comments from parents during consultation evenings indicated that this was as a result of the implementation programme within school.”*

(LiRe Researcher from the UK)

## FICTIONAL CHARACTERS GET THEIR OWN BLOGS

### Objectives

- To delve into a specific book and identify with its characters and author.
- Children to play with books, utilizing ICT tools.
- Children to interact within reading communities, playing, communicating, and discussing book-and-reading-related issues.

### Setting, materials and preparation

- Place: Computer lab, classroom, or library.
- Materials: PCs, Blogs.

### Step-by-Step Description

- Each group selects a book to be read by all group members.
- Before reading the book, each member selects a character from this particular story (teacher could provide a list with the book's characters)
- As they read the book, each group member/fictional character writes a Blog about their experiences in the story, communicating how they feel, what they think, and in general writing as if they were the characters.
- The children/"heroes" read each other's Blogs and meet in their groups discuss.

### Sources

Merenyi, A. et al (2010). *101 Ideas for Innovative Teachers*. Budapest: Microsoft.

Merenyi, A. et al (2010). *101 Ιδέες για Πρωτοπόρους Εκπαιδευτικούς*. Μτφρ. Γιάννα Σκαρβέλη. Αθήνα: Microsoft.

#### **Results from PISA**

*"Being more enthusiastic about reading and being a frequent reader was more of an advantage on its own than having well-educated parents in good jobs"*

(OECD, 2002: 3)

## BOOK AWARDS

### Objectives

- To increase reading motivation
- To develop personal preference
- To promote a love of reading
- To raise the profile of reading within the community

### Setting, materials and preparation

- Multiple copies of a selection of age appropriate books. Purchase trophies to award during the ceremony. Letter of explanation to parents.

### Step-by-Step Description

- Explain to the children that they will be voting for their favourite book and that school will be holding a book award ceremony for parents and children.
- Decide on a number of books for each class and make them available to the children to borrow and take home to share with parents.
- At the end of the term, the children can vote for their favourite book in each category e.g. most humorous, most exciting, best non-fiction etc.
- Hold an awards ceremony at school and invite parents to attend (invites designed and made by the children).
- Children to speak about their favourite books in front of the audience.
- Have a trophy and display with the multiple copies of the overall winning book in the library for children to borrow.



## CLASS BOOK SWAP

### Objectives

- To increase reading motivation
- To promote and encourage reading across the school
- To encourage dialogue and discussion around texts

### Setting, materials and preparation

- Letter to parents explaining the principles of the book swap. Setting up of central area.

### Step-by-Step Description

- Children to bring in a book that they no longer read at home.
- Talk about the book and why they enjoyed it. Outline the plot.
- Display the books in a central area.
- Invite children to choose a book to take away.

#### **Improved Reading Habits & Attitudes**

“When we had them read for 10-15 minutes every morning, they liked it so much that they would take out their books and read even during recess time; it was as if they were addicted to it”

“They would bring 3-4 books from home and share and read with their friends during recess; this was quite nice to watch and it showed that kids liked it”

**(Two teachers from Cyprus)**

## BOOK DETECTIVES

### Objectives

- To explore the characteristics of books with all their senses.
- To discover the variety of books available to them
- Children to come in touch with a big volume of texts.
- To experience the need to read specific books they have encountered during LiRe activities.

### Setting, materials, and preparation

- Place: Library, classroom

### Step -by-step description

The activity can take place with individual students or in groups. The idea is for children to play as “Book Detectives”

- Children work in pairs and read a book to themselves.
- They then have to write a set of questions based on the book that they have read
- Give the questions to their partner.
- Partners have to answer the questions in their detective note books
- Swap back and compare answers with their partner.
- Who managed to find all the answers?

### Sources

Brasseur, P. (2005). *1001 activités autour du livre: raconter, explorer, jouer, créer*. Paris: Casterman.





## FOOTBALL TEAM

### Objectives

- To increase reading motivation.
- To promote a love of reading.
- To encourage a willingness to read for pleasure.

### Setting, materials and preparation

- Place: classroom

### Step-by-Step Description

- Invite the local football (or Rugby or martial arts club leaders etc) team to bring in their favourite children's book and current favourite book – fiction or non-fiction.
- Ask them to talk to the children about why they enjoyed that book, why they think reading is important and ask the children what they enjoy reading.
- Encourage the children to note down the books that the members of the football team bring with them.
- Ask the children to write a letter to the Head Teacher/librarian persuading them to buy that book for the school library.

### Sources

[http://www.literacytrust.org.uk/reading\\_champions/](http://www.literacytrust.org.uk/reading_champions/)



## OLYMPIC READING TRAIL

### Objectives

- To encourage children to read more widely
- To develop a willingness to read for pleasure and enjoyment

### Setting, materials and preparation

- Display board with genres displayed, books from the library, local libraries, parent information leaflet, bronze, silver and gold medals.

### Step-by-Step Description

- Each of the events in the pentathlon event represent a different focus eg humour, adventure, mystery, poetry, animal stories etc.
- These are displayed within school.
- For every type of book a child reads that relates to one of the foci, they receive a stamp in their Olympic passport.
- When they have read one book from each of the 5 foci, they receive a bronze medal which is presented to them in a special 'ceremony' in front of the whole school.
- To gain their silver medal, they must read a further book from each section.
- To gain a gold medal, they need to read a third book from each section.
- Parents are informed of the Olympic Reading Trail so as to help their children choose appropriate books.

### Sources

[www.hvlc.org.uk](http://www.hvlc.org.uk)





## READING IN THE TENT

### Objectives

- To engage children in reading through open and authentic activities.
- To receive the message that reading is about enjoyment, reading is something that you can do anytime and anywhere, and that reading can be deeply personal and social at the same time.
- Children to develop their storytelling and book-talking skills.
- To develop reading communities and enhance the school's reading culture.

### Setting, materials and preparation

- Tents, torches, copies of books from the library, various puppets to represent characters in the books, props that may be used to act out the stories.

### Step-by-Step Description

- Set up 2-3 small tents on the school field or forest area.
- Leave a selection of well known, age appropriate books, torches, puppets and props in these tents.
- Children to choose to enter a tent and explore the reading material.
- Children can be encouraged to act out the stories using the various props or puppets.
- Alternatively, a teacher or adult helper could share the book with the children and then leave them to engage in role play or act out the story with the various props and puppets.
- Finally, discuss the stories with the children and re-tell as a whole class session.

### Sources

Corbett, P. (2006). *The bumper book of storytelling into writing at key stage 1*. Wiltshire, Clown Publishing.

## MY TEACHER'S FAVOURITE BOOK BOARD

### Objectives

- To raise the profile of reading within the school.
- To encourage children to read more widely for enjoyment.

### Setting, materials and preparation

- Large display board, photographs of staff in school, copies of the chosen books available for borrowing.

### Step-by-Step Description

- Staff to have their photograph taken reading their favourite children's book.
- This photo to be displayed in a central area together with reasons for the choice.
- Copies of this book made available in the school library or in classrooms for children to borrow.
- Member of staff to ask for feedback on the book – children can leave their comments in a comment box for that member of staff to collect and address in a whole class session.

### Sources

[www.literacytrust.org.uk/reading\\_champions](http://www.literacytrust.org.uk/reading_champions)



## A READING CAFE

### Objectives

- to promote reading for enjoyment
- to establish a reading habit
- to develop reading comprehension skills



### Setting, materials and preparation

- Tables with tablecloths and flowers, drinks, cakes, books, laptops

### Step-by-Step Description

- Set up a room as a café, with tablecloths and flowers on the tables, cakes and drinks available. Set out multiple copies of books from the library on the tables.
- Invite a group of children to visit the reading café.
- Ask the children to read the first chapter whilst eating their cakes and drinking their beverages. Ideally, this should take about 10-15 minutes.
- Allow the children to initiate a discussion about what they have read and predict what might happen next in the story.
- Children to use the laptops to record their thoughts, either as a wiki page or as an individual blog.
- Encourage the children to read the next few chapters before the next café session.
- At the next meeting, discuss what actually happened in the book and compare with their initial thoughts on the book.
- A teacher could ask pertinent questions to move the discussion forward and the group read the next chapter independently and records their thoughts once more.
- The meetings continue until the group have finished the book
- At the final meeting, the children use the computer to write a short recommendation to publish on a class website.

### Sources

[www.readingconnects.org.uk](http://www.readingconnects.org.uk)



# STORY SACKS

## Objectives

- To encourage families to tell stories together.
- To motivate and inspire families to read with their children.

## Setting, materials and preparation

- Setting: School library, classrooms,
- Materials: Cloth bags, paints and markers that may be used on cloth, pieces of old clothing or other materials that can be used to decorate the story sacks, a variety of books, games, cards, board games, digital content, etc., as described below.

## Step-by-Step Description

- Staff and volunteers collaborate to make story sacks
- These should be attractively decorated sacks (made of sturdy material), filled with story inspiring objects, sets of storytelling cards, stories, puppets, relevant board games, etc., as well as instructions for families and suggestions for playing with the material and creating stories. Choose popular texts.
- The sacks are lent out to families, so they can use them at home for storytelling, reading, and creative activities and also used in the classrooms for children to explore alongside the book.
- At school, children are encouraged to tell their story sack stories and a book is created containing all the stories.

## Sources

Osborne, S., Strong, J. & Torsi, S. (2008). *Reading Connects Family Involvement Toolkit*. London: National Literacy Trust.

MANY MORE ACTIONS & ACTIVITIES AT:

[http://www.lifelongreaders.org/actions\\_new.html](http://www.lifelongreaders.org/actions_new.html)



Conclusions and suggestions from schools that have used the *LiRe Framework*



## Implementation Report from Ireland

### Executive Summary:

The guiding premise for this project is the assertion that “a lifelong learner is first and foremost a lifelong reader”. It is well established that the early childhood years serve as an important foundation for subsequent literacy development. The degree to which children acquire literacy skills is known to be



a strong predictor of future academic success and has long-term social and economic implications for families and societies. In a statement issued by the International Reading Association and the National Association for the Education of Young Children, they stress "one of the best predictors of whether a child will function competently in school and go on to contribute actively in our increasingly literate society is the level to which the child progresses in reading and writing" (IRA/NAEYC, 1998, p. 30).

Reading for pleasure is an important concept to the success of lifelong readers. Reading for pleasure refers to reading that we do of our own free will anticipating the satisfaction that we will get from the act of reading. It also refers to reading that having begun at someone else's request we continue because we are interested in it. It typically involves materials that reflect our own choice, at a time and place that suits us.

The following report describes the implementation of the Lifelong Readers Project in St. Patrick's Boys National School from October 2012 to June 2013. The report provides a context of implementation, providing background information on St. Patrick's BNS and a snapshot of their school community. A short description of the teacher training modules and reading promotion plan follows. The data collection methods implemented and their findings are then presented. The final part of the report deals with

recommendations and conclusions of the implementation process of lifelong readers project in St. Patrick's BNS.

## Findings:

Reading Habits Evaluation:

*Part 1: Taken on December 14<sup>th</sup> 2012*

The data collected from Group 1 (ages 4-7) outlined the following:

- \* Infants find reading Fun and Important.
- \* Infants read mostly books, comics and magazines.
- \* Infants read mostly at home and with mum and dad.
- \* Mum read most to Infants.
- \* Infants enjoy visiting the library, bookshop and getting books as a present.



The data collected from Group 2 (ages 7-9) outlined the following:

- \* 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Class pupils indicate that reading is Important, Fun and Hard.
- \* They read mostly books, comics, magazines and some websites.
- \* They read mostly in school.
- \* 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Class pupils enjoy visiting the library, bookshop and getting books as a present.

The comparison in regards to reading habits between the Groups 1 and 2 presents:

- \* Increase in Boring and Hard responses as pupils get older.
- \* Reading from websites not as prevalent as could be.
- \* Reading at home decreases as pupils get older. Reading at school increases as pupils get older.
- \* Teacher not seen as role model for reading, rather as a teacher for reading.

- \* Barriers to reading: more books needed, more time, accessibility to age appropriate books, quiet area to read, parents reading child.

Individual Interview with teaching staff members/Group Interview with teaching staff/Individual interview with parents:

The following themes emerged from analysis of interviews:

- Training in reading promotion
- Whole school approach to reading promotion
- Parental involvement
- Attitude to reading promotion
- Reading culture in school
- Enjoyment of reading



#### *Training in Reading Promotion:*

Throughout the course of the interviews both teachers and parents expressed their desire for further training in how to promote reading for pleasure for their children and that they have learned a lot from the experience of implementing lifelong readers in their school. Teacher: *“learning not to take it for granted that children are reading, are readers and just because you’re teaching them how to read doesn’t mean that they are readers so that’s a whole other area that has to be taken into account.”*

#### *Whole School Approach to Reading Promotion:*

##### *Parental Involvement*

Parental involvement was a concern of teachers prior to implementing lifelong readers, as they had negative experiences in the past. However in the implementation of lifelong readers the contribution of parents was seen as very positive. A teacher remarking on the participation of the Bedtime Stories activity remarked *“it (the room) was packed to the gills with parents”*. A parent remarked on the programme *“the LiRe programme can create social skills and have a great impact on a child’s development. Reading to a child is very rewarding as the child loves to hear stories and will hang on your every word”*.



### *Attitudes to Reading Promotion:*

An important development during the implementation of lifelong readers was the change of dispositions towards reading promotion activities on behalf of the teachers. One teacher remarked *“And I think that even the parents and the teachers are more aware of themselves as model.”*

### *Reading Culture in School:*

Both teachers and parents remarked on the change of reading culture in the school. This was seen as a positive development. Many remarks echo the following *“it’s great to hear kids talking about books and saying “oh have you read this one?” and “try this one” and “oh I like that bit”.”*

### *Enjoyment of Reading:*

All respondents indicated that there has been evidence of more children reading for pleasure than prior to the implementation of the lifelong readers programme. A teacher remarked *“we’ve also had a few mention that they are going to buy Kindles with their First Communion money so that’s a good thing too”.*



## Recommendations:

### Practitioners:

1. **Start Small:** teaching professionals should familiarize themselves with the lifelong readers framework and website. It is recommended to start small. Begin by testing out one or two of the reading promotion activities in the classroom. At this time it is important to keep notes of how the activities went, what worked well and what could be improved.
2. **Gathering Data:** to understand what the needs of the pupils are in relation to reading promotion it is important to gather relevant data. The lifelong readers pupil reading habit evaluation is quite lengthy and difficult to administer. Adapting and shortening the questionnaire is a sensible option. It is also recommended that a fair sample of pupil be taken. There is no need to survey all pupils, a fair selection is adequate to get an overall picture of the pupil's needs.
3. **Awareness Spreading:** it is important that awareness of reading promotion is kept high on the agendas of the teaching staff. If there is to be sustainable culture change relentless awareness dissemination is required. Posters highlighting reading for pleasure, having it as an item on the staff meeting agendas and talking to fellow professionals about it are all effective ways of spreading awareness.
4. **Parental Involvement:** in our findings parental involvement was seen as a key success. Practitioners are recommended to involvement parents in their reading promotion activities.
5. **Outside the School Community:** the use of the local library is a great way of enhancing reading promotion activities. Often libraries run community events and initiatives to promote reading. Practitioners are recommended to investigate how the library and school can work together to promote reading among young people.



## Policy Makers:

1. **Organic policy making:** it is recommended that policy makers should not impose the lifelong readers programme in a directive manner to their practitioners. It is recommended that leaders of schools should provide teachers with the tools to research the need of reading promotion programmes in their school. Once findings have been made the leaders can endorse the lifelong readers programme as a possible solution. Responsibility for drafting and implementing the action plan for reading promotion should be given to teachers. It is important to empower practitioners at an early stage, if they are to become active contributors to the programme.
2. **Spreading Awareness:** it is important to place emphasis on the dissemination of awareness. It is recommended that digital media be used to articulate the message to the wider school community.
3. **Reading Promotion Team:** it is recommended that a reading promotion team be established to oversee the implementation of the lifelongreaders programme. It is important that this group is not part of a larger School Evaluation Team, as reading promotion must be a priority one team of practitioners.
4. **Teacher Training:** it is recommended that policy-makers invest in teacher training n the area of reading promotion. Many teachers identified this as a need in their professional development. All efforts should be made to encourage teachers to up skill in this area.

### **Improved Reading Habits & Attitudes**

*“When we had them read for 10-15 minutes every morning, they liked it so much that they would take out their books and read even during recess time; it was as if they were addicted to it”*

*“They would bring 3-4 books from home and share and read with their friends during recess; this was quite nice to watch and it showed that kids liked it”*

(Two teachers from Cyprus)

# Lifelong Readers Findings from all Participating Countries

## Executive Summary:

The following report documents the implementation and the findings of Lifelong Readers case studies conducted by European partners during the school year 2012-2013. Based on the Lifelong Readers Framework (LiRe), European partners along with schools from their countries collaborated to develop and implement a whole-school reading promotion programme. The general aim was to improve children's reading habits and attitudes, through the development of a reading culture and the formation of reading communities.



The programme was initiated through school staff training, which introduced teachers to the LiRe approach and effective reading promotion activities. The workshops also focused on identify needs, setting objectives and designing a whole school reading promotion plan. Staff training consisted of three training workshops with the aim of fostering a respect for reading promotion and to familiarise teachers with the Lifelong Readers Framework. The end product of the training workshops was a whole school reading promotion plan to be implemented at school level.

A comparison between pre- and post- Reading Habits Evaluations, as well as data from observations, interviews and a focus group discussion, point to overall improvement in students' reading habits and attitudes towards reading and books. Teachers also completed Reading Promotion Evaluation questionnaires at the beginning and end of the programme, evaluating their school's reading promotion practices. On the whole teachers recognized an improvement in the reading culture of the school, student's attitudes towards reading and in the promotion of whole school events.

Through qualitative research methods and collaboration between European partners a comprehensive list of recommendations for both practitioners and policy-makers are outlined in this report. These recommendations are practical in nature and designed to aid schools in implementing the Lifelong Readers Framework.

## Findings:

### Successes:

All partners reported on the successes of the lifelong readers programme. Key themes included: increased pupil interest levels, reading for enjoyment, enriched reading culture in schools, parental involvement and reading during school holidays.

#### 1. Increased Pupil Interest Levels:

All partners reported a rise in pupils interest levels in reading. Evidence of this was found through the Reading Habits Evaluation Tool. Some of the comments from our partners included:

“It was surprising that the 12 year olds, who usually are tired in the afternoon and for this reason very excited and noisy during the classes, were listening carefully to each other during the Cacao Book Discussion Club with my Favourite Book activity; they made comments, gave additional information about the books presented. “I never had such order in those classes as during the Cacao Book Discussion Club activity”, shared her experience the teacher who implemented this activity.” (Austria)

“According to the findings, pupils after the implementation checked out books for the library every day in a 33%, while before the implementation 1-2 times a week in a greater percentage.” (Greece)

2nd Grade Teacher: “And having a small library and checking out books... this way [the children] developed certain attitudes. The library, the librarian, checking out and returning a book... this way they acquire some attitudes and skills they will need in the future. They are not satisfied anymore when we tell them “pick a book from the classroom library and sit and read.” I can see that we lose them a little bit there, while whenever I bring them here [to the central library] their mind-set is completely different.” (Cyprus)

“All staff that were interviewed concluded that the programme had been successful in enhancing current provision with the opening of the new school library being heralded as a key factor in this:

‘children were missing their lunch because they were so excited to get to the library’ and ‘constantly ask me to get books by particular authors’. “ (UK)

“70% of the students took part in the activities and we could notice much interest and much fun in common reading and knowing new things.” (Poland)



## 2. Reading for Enjoyment:

All partners reported an increase in reading for enjoyment levels. Some of the comments from partners are reported below-

“All respondents indicated that there has been evidence of more children reading for pleasure than prior to the implementation of the lifelong readers programme. A teacher remarked “we’ve also had a few mention that they are going to buy Kindles with their First Communion money so that’s a good thing too”. (Ireland)



First-grade teacher: “Our book day was the zenith, as children liked it very much, and I even heard comments by variedly aged kids saying that this was the best school day of the year and that they were very impressed”. (Cyprus)

“The percentage of the pupils that they read during the holidays rose to 38% and there was also a very important improvement in reading aloud in class (63%). At the same time pupils stated that they dedicate more time to read at home and school as long as it is not part of homework.” (Greece)

“One key member of staff spoke about how reading had helped to develop confidence and self-esteem with some children. One child who had previously struggled to finish a book had come to her and talked about how many pages she had read and how she would be finished very soon because she was eager to reach the end.” (UK)



First Grade Teacher: “When we had them read for 10-15 minutes every morning, they liked it so much that they would take out their books and read even during recess time; it was as if they were addicted to it. I believe that they enjoyed the 10-minute FVR a lot”. (Cyprus)

“The impact upon reading at home is evident with an increase from 4 pupils to 12 pupils indicating that they have time to read at home. In addition, there was more than a 100% increase of pupils responding that they like reading in their free time, a view reinforced by one interviewee who alluded to the amount of children choosing to take books outside with them during break times.” (UK)



“The positive results of the programme convinced us – the teachers, that such activities are very important in developing our students. Many of my students started having fun in reading not only the sport news, but also literature.” (Poland).

### 3. Enriched Reading Culture in Schools:



The effective implementation of the lifelong readers programme on a whole school level resulted in an enrichment of the reading culture of each school that took part. Some examples are documented below.

“The school library stock in School No. 2 was enlarged; the library stocks offer now books in many different genres or reading material such as magazines, newspapers, comics, films on DVD, etc. A range of dual language texts or appropriate materials reflecting pupils’ diverse cultures and backgrounds is available for pupils to borrow.” (Austria)

“Even teachers that were not that actively involved in the reading-promotion effort said at the end of the day that this event should definitely be repeated next year. In the two interviews and focus group discussion, teachers marked this whole-day event as important because: It included a wide variety of activities; Children interacted with diverse people: teachers, university students, actors, authors, etc.; Children did not get bored or tired, as they would move from one activity to a completely different one and so on; It was very well organized; Children were actively involved and engaged; Parents were excited about the event and asked to be more intensely involved in a similar event next year.” (Cyprus)

“Both teachers and parents remarked on the change of reading culture in the school. This was seen as a positive development. Many remarks echo the following “it’s great to hear kids talking about books and saying “oh have you read this one?” and “try this one” and “oh I like that bit’.” (Ireland)

“There was a significant increase in the response to question 41, with nine more pupils indicating that they discuss what they have read in class with their teachers and peers. This seems to suggest that the heightened visibility of reading throughout the school has promoted and encouraged more conversations around books. One interviewee felt that ‘children were more aware of books’.” (UK)

“Similar with the school library stock, which was enriched with many genres of books and was upgraded at a developed stage. Moreover, after the implementation of the reading plan, the tool showed an improvement in the organization of events related to books and to peer-to-peer recommendation. The most important was the development of visibility of reading culture at a developed stage (88%), as well as the development of a strategy for the reading promotion.” (Greece)

Second Grade Teacher: “And they did it [FVR] during recess as well. They would bring 3-4 books from home and share and read with their friends during recess; this was quite nice to watch and it showed that kids liked it.” This observation is even more important in its description of book-sharing as a social phenomenon; as part of a developing reading community and culture.(Cyprus)

“Hopefully, we will have the continuation of the programme, and with the support of the teachers, I am looking forward to the second, third or fourth programme like that” (Poland)

### **Reading for Enjoyment**

*“Our book day was the zenith, as children liked it very much, and I even heard comments by variedly aged kids saying that this was the best school day of the year and that they were very impressed”*

(First-grade teacher from Cyprus)

#### **4. Parental Involvement:**

Some partners reported a positive increase in the involvement of parents in regards to their child’s reading. It was also noticeable that parents were heavily involved in many of the lifelong readers school activities.

“Parental involvement was a concern of teachers prior to implementing lifelong readers, as they had negative experiences in the past. However in the implementation of lifelong readers the contribution of parents was seen as very positive. A teacher remarking on

the participation of the Bedtime Stories activity remarked “it (the room) was packed to the gills with parents”. A parent remarked on the programme “the LiRe programme can create social skills and have a great impact on a child’s development. Reading to a child is very rewarding as the child loves to hear stories and will hang on your every word”. (Ireland)



“The fact that both teachers and parents like reading books at a great percentage (67% and 50%), is a significant factor that motives and encourages children to read more. Moreover, the majority of pupils choose by themselves the books that they read (71%), which refer at a topic that interests them and like discussing it with friends or family.” (Greece)

“Parents should be involved in teaching their children to spend their time with books. Such a programme integrates parents with the school and helps them to understand their role in children education”.(Poland)

“Time to read at home (Q23) revealed a significant increase which would again suggest that reading for pleasure was being valued within the home environment .....anecdotal comments from parents during consultation evenings indicated that this was as a result of the implementation programme within school.” (UK)

## **5. Reading During the School Holidays:**

One partner reported a marked increase in pupils reading during school holidays.

“The percentage of the pupils that they read during the holidays rose to 38%.” (Greece)

## **Challenges:**

As is evident above there were significant successes of the programme across all European partners. However as with any implementation process challenges and areas for development of the programme were highlighted and reported as follows.

### **1. Sustainability of the Lifelong readers Programme:**

“The particular challenges were mainly articulated by the 2 key members of staff and included.....the logistics of monitoring the process within the school and how they could sustain the impact of the programme in the future.” (UK)

“a reading promotion team is needed to oversee the implementation of the lifelong readers programme. It is important that this group is not part of a larger School

Evaluation Team, as reading promotion must be a priority of one team of practitioners, if it is to be sustainable” (Ireland)

## 2. Teacher Training:

“Throughout the course of the interviews both teachers and parents expressed their desire for further training in how to promote reading for pleasure for their children and that they have learned a lot from the experience of implementing lifelong readers in their school. Teacher: “learning not to take it for granted that children are reading, are readers and just because you’re teaching them how to read doesn’t mean that they are readers so that’s a whole other area that has to be taken into account.” (Ireland)



## Unengaged Children:

“There are children (fortunately a very small percent) from both schools who refuse to read at all.” (Austria)

“In summer holidays most of the children visit their grandparents in their country of origin. There they don’t have opportunities to be involved in reading promotion activities. In families where parents are either not interested in reading, or not able to help in it, children do not read a single book during the summer holidays.” (Austria)

“an area that needs to be addressed is the summer reading program so that you can continue to guide the students in their intellectual development even when they are out of school.” (Poland)

## A School-wide Reading Culture

*“The idea and the programme as a whole have created a culture where we have planted a seed and it has grown into a small tree. If it gets more water, it will grow into a school culture and a culture for all children living in this area that will last forever”*



## Recommendations:

### Gathering Data:

- The lifelong readers pupil reading habit evaluation is quite lengthy and time consuming to administer. Adapting and shortening the questionnaire is a sensible option.
- Involve all school staff in the initial evaluations and identification of needs and objectives, as this will mobilize them and stimulate their interest in and thinking about reading promotion.
- It is also recommended that a fair sample of pupil be taken. There is no need to survey all pupils, a fair selection is adequate to get an overall picture of the pupils needs.
- Have all teachers participate actively in the formation of the actual plan, as this will enhance staff's feeling of empowerment, agency, ownership of the reading promotion process and engagement in implementing the plan.
- Make sure that all stakeholders are convinced that reading promotion is important and worthwhile, and it should thus be part of the school's efforts year after year after year. Creating and sustaining a reading culture cannot be achieved in a one-off approach, but needs to be continually explored and developed.
- It is important to assess the reading habits of the pupils at the beginning and end of the implementation process in order to obtain data reflective of the effectiveness of the programme.
- Set realistic objectives and agree on a reading promotion plan that takes into account the availability of resources (staff, time, materials). The plan should feature a limited number of targeted areas and include organized and systematic activities (that take place regularly) as well as one-off events. The plan should be detailed, listing meticulous information about what exactly will take place, who will participate and at what time, as well as resources, success criteria and achieved dates.
- Ensure that during the first couple of years your efforts are supported by reading promotion experts, who function as trainers at the beginning and advisors or critical friends as the programme evolves.

### Using the Lifelong readers Reading Promotion Activities:

- It is recommended to start small. Begin by testing out one or two of the reading promotion activities in the classroom. At this time it is important to keep notes of how the activities went, what worked well and what could be improved.
- Involve pupils with the formulation of activities so as to build upon their interests
- Take time to explore the variety of activities on the website and adapt as necessary
- Trial activities with small groups of pupils so as to determine the most effective activities for reading promotion
- Reading promotion activities need to be tailored to the needs of individual pupils and so may need adapting
- If possible involve parents in the activities of the classroom, alternatively inform them of the reading promotion initiative of the school.
- Children from an international background may be helped from reading books in their native language and through the engagement of parents.
- It is important that awareness of reading promotion is kept high on the agendas of the teaching staff. Posters highlighting reading for pleasure, having it as an item on the staff meeting agendas and talking to fellow professionals about it are all effective ways of spreading awareness.
- The use of the local library is a great way of enhancing reading promotion activities. Often libraries run community events and initiatives to promote reading. Practitioners are recommended to investigate how the library and school can work together to promote reading among young people.





## Recommendations for Policymakers:

- It is recommended that policy makers should not impose the lifelong readers programme in a directive manner to practitioners. It is important to empower practitioners at an early stage, if they are to become active contributors to the programme.
- Complete an audit in order to pinpoint areas for development and compare views on the reading ethos within school as assumptions can sometimes be made rather than judgements being based on research. Once findings have been made policymakers can endorse the lifelong readers programme as a possible solution.
- It is recommended that leaders of schools should provide teachers with the tools to research the need of reading promotion programmes in their school. Invest time in discussing the value that individual staff members place on reading so that there is a shared vision and an informed action plan.
- Responsibility for drafting and implementing the action plan for reading promotion should be given to teachers. Use expertise of staff members to collectively develop a reading promotion programme.
- Ensure that all staff are actively engaged in the reading promotion programme through systematic monitoring.
- It is important to place emphasis on the dissemination of awareness. It is recommended that digital media be used to articulate the message to the wider school community.
- It is recommended that a reading promotion team be established to oversee the implementation of the lifelong readers programme.
- It is recommended that policy-makers invest in teacher training in the area of reading promotion. All efforts should be made to encourage teachers to up skill in this area, perhaps by means of a CPD certificate or accreditation.
- Invest in a high quality school library that stocks books chosen by pupils and staff to increase engagement
- Set up reading clubs for pupils based on the reading cafe model as a whole school policy.



- Support financially and technically the formation or renovation of the central school library and classroom libraries, as these are proved pivotal in the formation of a school’s reading culture. Librarians should be employed in central school libraries.
- Encourage and promote reading events for pupils, staff and parents. For example, world book day dressing up events, extreme reading competitions, wall of books, bedtime reading

Involve the project results as an integrated part of the teacher education programmes, and in –service teacher training programmes, especially the Reading Habits Evaluation Tools (LiRe Questionnaire for pupils), Reading Promotion Evaluation Tools (Questionnaire for School staff), the Training Modules, the Book Presentations and the Book Discussions.

### **Increased Pupil Interest Levels**

*“It was surprising that the 12 year olds, who usually are tired in the afternoon and for this reason very excited and noisy during the classes, were listening carefully to each other during the Cacao Book Discussion Club with my Favourite Book activity; they made comments, gave additional information about the books presented. I never had such order in those classes as during the Cacao Book Discussion Club activity”*

(Teacher from Austria)



## Documents you could readily use



READING HABITS EVALUATION QUESTIONNAIRE

Please tick (✓) the most appropriate option.

1. Gender:	<input type="checkbox"/> Boy	<input type="checkbox"/> Girl		
2. Grade: _____				
3. What languages do you speak at home?	_____	_____	_____	

4. I like reading ... [please tick (✓) everything that you like to read]

<input type="checkbox"/> websites	<input type="checkbox"/> magazines	<input type="checkbox"/> newspapers	<input type="checkbox"/> stories about robots and spaceships
<input type="checkbox"/> poems	<input type="checkbox"/> comic books	<input type="checkbox"/> encyclopaedias	<input type="checkbox"/> stories about the old times
<input type="checkbox"/> adventure stories	<input type="checkbox"/> stories about magic	<input type="checkbox"/> stories about everyday children	<input type="checkbox"/> stories about princes and princesses
<input type="checkbox"/> mysteries	<input type="checkbox"/> "how to" books	<input type="checkbox"/> biographies	<input type="checkbox"/> (other) _____

5. I read a book silently in class:

<input type="checkbox"/> never	<input type="checkbox"/> 2-3 times a year	<input type="checkbox"/> once a month	<input type="checkbox"/> once a week	<input type="checkbox"/> every day
--------------------------------	---	---------------------------------------	--------------------------------------	------------------------------------

6. At home, I read books for pleasure (not as part of my homework):

<input type="checkbox"/> never	<input type="checkbox"/> 2-3 times a year	<input type="checkbox"/> once a month	<input type="checkbox"/> once a week	<input type="checkbox"/> every day
--------------------------------	---	---------------------------------------	--------------------------------------	------------------------------------

7. I check out books from a library:

<input type="checkbox"/> never	<input type="checkbox"/> 2-3 times a year	<input type="checkbox"/> 1-2 times a month	<input type="checkbox"/> 1-2 times a week	<input type="checkbox"/> every day
--------------------------------	---	--	---	------------------------------------

8. During my past summer holidays, I read:

<input type="checkbox"/> no books	<input type="checkbox"/> 1-2 books	<input type="checkbox"/> 3-4 books	<input type="checkbox"/> 5-6 books	<input type="checkbox"/> more than 6 books
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9. I discuss with friends and family about something that I read during my free time:

<input type="checkbox"/> never	<input type="checkbox"/> 2-3 times a year	<input type="checkbox"/> 1-2 times a month	<input type="checkbox"/> 1-2 times a week	<input type="checkbox"/> every day
--------------------------------	---	--	---	------------------------------------

10. Who reads stories to you at home? ... [please tick (✓) all the boxes that apply]

<input type="checkbox"/> My father	<input type="checkbox"/> My mother	<input type="checkbox"/> Other adult	<input type="checkbox"/> My brother/sister	<input type="checkbox"/> No-one
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11. In class, I read stories by using ... [please tick (✓) all the boxes that apply]

<input type="checkbox"/> a computer	<input type="checkbox"/> a tablet (e.g. iPad)	<input type="checkbox"/> a mobile phone	<input type="checkbox"/> the internet	<input type="checkbox"/> I do not use technology
-------------------------------------	---	---	---------------------------------------	--

12. At home, I read stories by using ... [please tick (✓) all the boxes that apply]

<input type="checkbox"/> a computer	<input type="checkbox"/> a tablet (e.g. iPad)	<input type="checkbox"/> a mobile phone	<input type="checkbox"/> the internet	<input type="checkbox"/> I do not use technology
-------------------------------------	---	---	---------------------------------------	--



<b>Please indicate the degree to which each of the following statements is true by circling the appropriate number as it corresponds to the scale on the right:</b>	<b>Not at all</b>	<b>Not very much</b>	<b>Fairly</b>	<b>Quite a lot</b>	<b>Very much</b>
13. I am good at reading.	1	2	3	4	5
14. I like reading at home (not as part of my homework).	1	2	3	4	5
15. I like reading at school (not as part of classwork or homework).	1	2	3	4	5
16. I like it when I get books as gifts.	1	2	3	4	5
17. I like reading in my free time.	1	2	3	4	5
18. I like reading during the holidays.	1	2	3	4	5
19. I like reading aloud in class.	1	2	3	4	5
20. I like going to bookshops.	1	2	3	4	5
21. I like going to libraries.	1	2	3	4	5
22. I find it hard to read.	1	2	3	4	5
23. I have time at home to read (not as part of my homework).	1	2	3	4	5
24. I have time at school to read (not as part of classwork or homework).	1	2	3	4	5
25. My friends like reading (not as part of their homework).	1	2	3	4	5
26. My teacher likes reading.	1	2	3	4	5
27. My father/mother likes reading.	1	2	3	4	5
28. My teacher reads stories to us in class.	1	2	3	4	5
29. My father/mother reads stories to me.	1	2	3	4	5
30. I like choosing by myself the books that I read.	1	2	3	4	5
31. I like my classroom library.	1	2	3	4	5
32. I get tired when I read.	1	2	3	4	5
33. I like reading books to learn about things that interest me.	1	2	3	4	5
34. I like discussing with friends or family about what I read.	1	2	3	4	5
35. I like the place that I have at home for reading.	1	2	3	4	5
36. I like the place that I have at school for reading.	1	2	3	4	5
37. My teacher encourages me to read (not as part of my homework).	1	2	3	4	5



Please indicate the degree to which each of the following statements is true by circling the appropriate number as it corresponds to the scale on the right:	Not at all	Not much	Fairly	Quite a lot	Very much
38. My father/mother encourages me to read (not as part of my homework).	1	2	3	4	5
39. My teacher helps me choose books that I like.	1	2	3	4	5
40. My father/mother helps me choose books that I like.	1	2	3	4	5
41. In class, we discuss about what we read.	1	2	3	4	5
42. At home, we discuss about what we read.	1	2	3	4	5
43. At school, they let us read books that we choose.	1	2	3	4	5
44. I think reading is boring.	1	2	3	4	5
45. We read magazines and comic books at school.	1	2	3	4	5
46. It is important to read in our free time.	1	2	3	4	5

Please complete the following statements. If you are not sure what to write, please leave the line blank.

47. This is one of my favourite books: \_\_\_\_\_

48. This is one of my favourite authors: \_\_\_\_\_

49. The titles of four books that I have read are:

a. \_\_\_\_\_

b. \_\_\_\_\_

c. \_\_\_\_\_

d. \_\_\_\_\_

50. I would get better at reading, if: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

51. I would read more books in my free time, if: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



**WHOLE SCHOOL READING PROMOTION EVALUATION PLAN**

*Please tick the box that is closer to describing reading promotion in your school. You can only tick one box in each row.*

Reading Promotion Area	Not yet initiated	At initial stage	At developed stage	At enhanced stage
<b>Whole-school strategy</b>	Does not apply to our school. <input type="checkbox"/>	Reading promotion is sometimes discussed during staff meetings and through staff communication. <input type="checkbox"/>	Promoting reading for pleasure is part of the School Improvement Plan. One staff member leads on this and all staff members are aware of this priority. <input type="checkbox"/>	A staff team leads reading promotion. A whole-school reading promotion plan is in place. Promoting reading for pleasure is central to the school's culture, policies and practices. <input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Whole-staff engagement</b>	Does not apply to our school. <input type="checkbox"/>	Some school staff members promote reading for pleasure. <input type="checkbox"/>	All staff members promote reading during class time. <input type="checkbox"/>	All school staff actively promotes reading in and out of class time. <input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Visibility of reading</b>	Does not apply to our school. <input type="checkbox"/>	The foyer, corridors, and classrooms celebrate reading to some extent. <input type="checkbox"/>	The foyer, corridors, and classrooms celebrate reading to some extent, and some reading promotion material is also circulated to students and parents. Some time is devoted during assemblies to reading promotion. <input type="checkbox"/>	The foyer, corridors, and classrooms celebrate all types of reading, including pupil recommendations. School publicity material, including websites and newsletters, promotes the importance of all types of reading. Substantial time is devoted during assemblies to reading promotion. <input type="checkbox"/>

Reading Promotion Area	Not yet initiated	At initial stage	At developed stage	At enhanced stage
<b>Peer-to-peer recommendation</b>	Does not apply to our school. <input type="checkbox"/>	Some peer-to-peer reading recommendation takes place between pupils. <input type="checkbox"/>	A system for peer-to-peer reading recommendation between pupils is established in most classes. <input type="checkbox"/>	Peer-to-peer reading recommendation and interaction between pupils take place in multiple, creative, and effective ways throughout the school community. <input type="checkbox"/>
<b>ICT</b>	Does not apply to our school. <input type="checkbox"/>	Pupils and staff use ICT to deliver book presentations and to perform other similar tasks. <input type="checkbox"/>	Pupils and staff use multimedia to promote reading activity in the school. They also read some digital texts. <input type="checkbox"/>	Peer-to-peer reading recommendation and interaction between pupils take place through the use of a technology-based system throughout the school community. Reading digital texts and ICT-based reading promotion take place on a regular basis. <input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Reading events</b>	Does not apply to our school. <input type="checkbox"/>	Reading is promoted during school events and in school assemblies. <input type="checkbox"/>	Several reading events are held each year, linking in with national events such as World Book Day. <input type="checkbox"/>	Several reading promotion events take place during every month of the school year, including a school book week/ reading focus week. <input type="checkbox"/>
<b>School library accessibility and display</b>	Does not apply to our school. <input type="checkbox"/>	Library is welcoming and resources are easily accessed. <input type="checkbox"/>	Clear signs and interesting displays encourage library use with promotions related to the curriculum. Library is open throughout the school day. <input type="checkbox"/>	All the previous boxes apply. In addition, school or class library is presented in bookshop style, and is also open beyond the school day. A school librarian is employed. <input type="checkbox"/>



Reading Promotion Area	Not yet initiated	At initial stage	At developed stage	At enhanced stage
<b>School library stock</b>	Does not apply to our school. <input type="checkbox"/>	School library stocks some fiction and non-fiction titles. <input type="checkbox"/>	School library stocks a good range of fiction and non-fiction titles. <input type="checkbox"/>	In addition, the school library also stocks other genres of reading material such as magazines, newspapers, comics, etc. It has a well-stocked section for pupils' caregivers and family members who are emergent adult readers. <input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Class libraries</b>	Does not apply to our school. <input type="checkbox"/>	Classrooms have a class library corner. <input type="checkbox"/>	Classrooms have a class library corner which is well stocked. <input type="checkbox"/>	Classrooms have a class library corner that is well stocked, welcoming and regularly updated. It includes children's published work. <input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Pupil involvement</b>	Does not apply to our school. <input type="checkbox"/>	Pupils are involved in suggesting and selecting some of the school's reading resources. <input type="checkbox"/>	Pupils are involved in suggesting and selecting some of the school's reading resources, with pupils' choices clearly marked. <input type="checkbox"/>	Pupil involvement in selection of school reading resources and library management is integral to the system. Pupils take initiatives to organize reading-related activities, such as reading clubs. Buddying systems are in place. <input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Involving organisations and adults from the community</b>	Does not apply to our school. <input type="checkbox"/>	Some community members/ organisations support reading in school – for example, through a volunteer reading scheme. <input type="checkbox"/>	School works with community members and organisations on project(s) to promote reading among pupils. <input type="checkbox"/>	Community members and organisations are regularly involved through coordinating reading activities in joint projects in and out of school. <input type="checkbox"/>

Reading Promotion Area	Not yet initiated	At initial stage	At developed stage	At enhanced stage
<b>Boys</b>	Does not apply to our school. <input type="checkbox"/>	School promotes reading materials and booklists targeted at boys. <input type="checkbox"/>	Boys' reading clubs are functioning. Reading events that apply to boys' interests take place at least once every three months. <input type="checkbox"/>	School runs an effective reading promotion plan that involves boys and male role models, addressing their needs and interests. Events take place at least once a month. <input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Pupils and families from diverse cultures and backgrounds</b>	Does not apply to our school. <input type="checkbox"/>	A range of dual language texts or appropriate materials reflecting pupils' diverse cultures and backgrounds is available for pupils to borrow. <input type="checkbox"/>	Previous box applies. In addition, school systems promoting reading for pleasure and reading groups are established to meet the needs of pupils from diverse cultures and backgrounds. <input type="checkbox"/>	Previous boxes apply. In addition, pupils and families from diverse cultures and backgrounds are involved in promoting reading to pupils. <input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Communication with families</b>	Does not apply to our school. <input type="checkbox"/>	All parents/caregivers are made aware of the importance of encouraging their children to read. The school supports them through materials like suggested booklists and reading tips. <input type="checkbox"/>	Previous box applies. In addition, communication methods are adapted to suit target group of parents/caregivers. Some parents/caregivers themselves are used as advocates. <input type="checkbox"/>	Previous boxes apply. In addition, parents/caregivers are offered regular support sessions on choosing reading materials and reading with children. Regular feedback from parents/caregivers and children is used to inform planning. <input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Family events and activities</b>	Does not apply to our school. <input type="checkbox"/>	Reading for pleasure is promoted during some school events and activities to which family members/caregivers are invited. <input type="checkbox"/>	Family reading events/ activities are often run during the year and some parents/ caregivers are involved in the planning. <input type="checkbox"/>	Family reading events/activities take place at least once a month, including events for target groups – for example, dads, grandparents or families for whom English is an additional language. <input type="checkbox"/>

## TEMPLATE

### Whole-School Reading Promotion Action Plan

Title/Slogan for the Initiative: \_\_\_\_\_

School: \_\_\_\_\_

Time Period: \_\_\_\_\_

Interim Review Date: \_\_\_\_\_

#	Objective(s)	Action Needed	Time Scale	Resources	Success Criteria	Member of Staff Responsible	Achieved (Date)
1.							
2.							
3.							
4.							
5.							
6.							
7.							
8.							



This project has been funded with support from the European Commission. This website reflects the views of the partners, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.



# LIFELONG READERS

## PARTNERS



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Coiste Gairmoideachais Chontae na Mí  
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