

Tesco Bank Summer Reading Challenge Scotland 2016 Participation Report



“This was a fantastic way of encouraging my child in using the local library as well as reading books that we had never heard of before. At age 7 my child needed to believe he could read for himself rather than Mum reading aloud to him all the time. The reading challenge gave him the boost and kick start he needed.”

Parent, North Lanarkshire

Overview

The Reading Agency, along with the UK public library network, has organised the Summer Reading Challenge since 1999. It is the UK’s biggest annual reading promotion for children aged four to eleven. Since 2011, Tesco Bank has sponsored the Challenge in Scotland where it runs as the Tesco Bank Summer Reading Challenge Scotland.

The Tesco Bank Summer Reading Challenge Scotland draws children into their local libraries and inspires them to read for pleasure by combining free access to books with fun social activities and a creative online element. Throughout the Challenge, library staff and teenage and adult volunteers support children, helping them to discover new authors and explore a wide range of different types of books.

Through programmes such as the Tesco Bank Summer Reading Challenge Scotland, The Reading Agency wants to inspire more people to read more, encourage them to share their enjoyment of reading and celebrate the difference that reading makes to all our lives. These programmes, delivered in partnership with libraries, are designed to take people on their personal reading journey and for many young readers the Challenge can be their first step on that journey.

Why the Tesco Bank Summer Reading Challenge Scotland is important

- Reading for pleasure is the best way to support children to develop into confident readers
- The Challenge provides libraries with a platform to engage with an increasingly diverse educational landscape
- The Challenge is accessible for children with a range of special education needs and disability
- The Challenge is cost effective and enables local authorities to benefit from economies of scale whilst being flexible to meet local priorities (the core materials costs libraries less than £1 per child.)
- Tesco Bank’s sponsorship gives each participating Scottish authority access to free materials for

up to 300 children, along with funding for a promotional event.

2016 Participation

Introduction

In 2016, 98% of UK local authorities took part in the Challenge. All participating authorities submitted data for inclusion in this report. The submissions include participation statistics and feedback from local authority run libraries, mobile libraries and volunteer-led libraries. The additional feedback provided helps The Reading Agency and libraries shape the Challenge of the future.

Total Participation

In total **771,788** children participated in the Summer Reading Challenge:

- **729,793** children across the UK participated at their local library (43% were boys)
- **25,415** children under 4 across the UK took part at their local library, using specially produced pre-school materials, an increase of 11.8% from 2015
- Internationally, the Summer Reading Challenge reached **16,580** children who participated though the British Council and the armed forces, and in Eire or the USA.



UK Library Participation

Of the **729,793** children who participated at their local library in the UK:

- **424,579** children (58%) completed the Challenge by reading at least six books (43% were boys)
- **68,040** children joined the library as new members during the Challenge this summer
- **7,761** volunteers aged 12 to 24 supported the Challenge.
- The families¹ that took part in the Challenge reported that it had strong positive impacts in the following areas:
 - 89% felt the Challenge helped their child enjoy reading
 - 82% believed that it encouraged children to read more over the summer
 - 77% felt that taking part increased library usage
- We estimate that there were more than **16 million** children's loans over the summer based on the data supplied by 80% of participating libraries about their borrowing figures
- **162,768** users visited the website
- **248** visually impaired children participated using specially produced VI materials

Tesco Bank Summer Reading Challenge Scotland Participation

- **43,486** children in Scotland participated in the Challenge at their local library (8.8% of the region's 4 to 12 year old child population). Of these children, 42% were boys.
- **22,558** children (52%) completed the Challenge by reading at least six books.

¹ [2016 Summer Reading Challenge Family Survey](#)

- A further **2,084** under 4-year-olds took part in the Challenge, using the specially produced pre-school materials.
- **1,660** children joined the library as new members during the Challenge this summer
- **80** young people aged 12 to 24 supported the Challenge through volunteering.
- We estimate that there were **551,303** children's library issues in Scotland over the summer based on the data supplied by 21 out of the 29 participating authorities about their borrowing figures.
- **13** visually impaired children took part using the RNIB supported materials.

How the Tesco Bank Summer Reading Challenge Scotland works

Each year, the Tesco Bank Summer Reading Challenge Scotland adopts a theme which is popular with children and families. For 2016 the theme was The Big Friendly Read, delivered in collaboration with The Roald Dahl Literary Estate to celebrate 100 years of the world's favourite storyteller. The Big Friendly Read featured some of Roald Dahl's best-loved characters and the amazing artwork of his principal illustrator, Sir Quentin Blake.



For more information, please visit our website readingagency.org.uk/children or our year-round children's website summerreadingchallenge.org.uk

The Tesco Bank Summer Reading Challenge Scotland and local authority corporate policy

Reading for pleasure

Ambition and Opportunity: A Strategy for Public Libraries in Scotland ²2015-2020 has six key strategic aims at its heart. Reading, Literacy and Learning is a key strategic aim and the Tesco Bank Summer Reading Challenge Scotland is a key part of the programme which supports this strategic aim.

² [National Strategy for Public Libraries in Scotland](http://NationalStrategyforPublicLibrariesinScotland)

The Tesco Bank Summer Reading Challenge Scotland, delivered by libraries, is the UK's leading reading for pleasure programme for primary aged children. The Challenge harnesses the power of reading for pleasure to improve children's life chances. Reading for pleasure is a more important determinant of children's educational success than their family's socio-economic status³ and the only out-of-school activity demonstrably linked to securing managerial or professional jobs⁴. The Challenge also motivates children to read more independently and often, and inspires boys to read outside the classroom (only 1 in 4 boys read outside class every day⁵).

"It was great to go to the library and chose different books. I liked the prizes each week." Child, Perth and Kinross

"Meg has been engrossed in her books like I've not seen before – and she's really enjoyed collecting her cards for her Big Friendly read collection book.... Looking forward to next summer" Parent, Midlothian

"Well-planned approaches to reading for enjoyment are resulting in increased confidence in reading and greater motivation including more reading at home." 3-18 Literacy and English Review (Education Scotland, 2015)

School readiness and successful learners

2,084 under 4s were able to take part in this year's Tesco Bank Summer Reading Challenge Scotland using the specially produced pre-school materials. Parents and carers who regularly share books with their young children are helping their child's speech and language development, which in turn sets their children up for the best start in their school lives⁶.

As well as ensuring school readiness, the Tesco Bank Summer Reading Challenge Scotland is also encouraging children who are already in school to continue reading over the long summer break. UKLA research⁷ showed that taking part in the Challenge helps prevent the summer dip in literacy skills, which is particularly damaging for disadvantaged children.

The challenge also supports all four capacities within Curriculum for Excellence:

- **Successful learners** - Libraries inspire children to read for pleasure and give them the tools for independent learning and creative thinking.
- **Confident individuals** - Reading inspires children's own ambitions and helps build their emotional intelligence and communication skills.
- **Effective contributors** - Taking part in reading and library activities encourages children to interact and contribute positively and creatively.
- **Responsible citizens** - Using libraries are great ways for children to participate in community and cultural life.

"I think it's a great idea, it expands my children's vocabulary and I have seen a huge difference in confidence when reading." Parent, Renfrewshire

"Literacy is fundamental to all areas of learning, as it unlocks access to the wider curriculum. Being literate increases opportunities for the individual in all aspects of life, lays the foundations for lifelong learning and

³ OECD 2002; Oxford University 2011

⁴ University of Oxford, 2011

⁵ The National Literacy Trust Report 2012

⁶ *Social Inequalities in Cognitive Scores at age 16: The Role of Reading*, Alice Sullivan and Matt Brown, 2013

⁷ *Summer Reading Challenge Impact Research Report*, UKLA, 2009

work, and contributes strongly to the development of all four capacities of Curriculum for Excellence.”

Principles and Practice paper (Curriculum for Excellence, Scotland)

Getting the message about the Tesco Bank Summer Reading Challenge Scotland into schools in the run up to the summer holidays is vital in encouraging children to participate.

In 2016, library staff visited **438** schools to promote the Tesco Bank Summer Reading Challenge Scotland. The Reading Agency also worked with libraries to develop a downloadable schools pack for library authorities to share with their local schools. The schools pack was designed to help teachers promote the Tesco Bank Summer Reading Challenge Scotland as a summer holiday activity to their pupils. The pack also proved to be an especially useful resource for libraries when staff capacity was reduced and when there was less time for school visits.

As well as making these resources available to libraries, they were also available for teachers to access directly – via The Reading Agency’s website and also on the TES website.

“We want to develop a strong reading culture in Scotland where reading is a valued activity from the earliest age. Sharing books in a family environment and the love of reading it creates enriches the family experience immeasurably, is likely to be passed from generation to generation and has a major beneficial impact on individual outcomes.” Literacy Action Plan (Scottish Government, 2010)

Health, well-being and confidence

The Tesco Bank Summer Reading Challenge Scotland brings families together through reading, as well as offering a rich variety of free creative events. These free events give children and families the opportunity to connect with others in a community setting, helping children to build their confidence in social interaction and strengthen family bonds. This year, through the Challenge, libraries gave **19,401** children and their families the opportunity to attend **1,931** high-quality events. The Challenge’s combination of fun, freedom, and creativity impacts significantly on children’s reading levels, range, motivation and confidence. Increasingly, the Challenge is being used by libraries and schools to target children most in need of support with reading.

“I enjoyed reading all the different books and trying books by different authors. Our library had lots of new books. I liked the Roald Dahl cards I got for reading each book.” Child, Renfrewshire

““My daughter now has the reading bug after taking part in the Big Friendly Read. She read reluctantly before but is now enjoying her books.” Parent, Midlothian

“Free access to the life enriching creative activity of reading will contribute to health and wellbeing, improve levels of literacy, inspire reading across all interests and age groups, and draw communities together to bring reading alive.” Scottish Reading Strategy for Public Libraries

Special Education Needs & Disability (SEND)

The Summer Reading Challenge is inclusive of all children and families, and all stages of reading development, allowing children with special education needs and disabilities to take part.

The Challenge is all about choice and puts the child in control. There are no levels so children can choose whatever they want to borrow from their library – joke books, graphic novels, poetry, non-fiction - and audio books count too.

In addition, we produce special materials VI materials which can also be used to help children with learning difficulties like dyslexia (due to the enhanced contrast, yellow background, large fonts).

Community Engagement through Volunteers

In 2016, 80 volunteers aged 12 to 24 supported the Tesco Bank Summer Reading Challenge Scotland; with the double benefits of acting as positive role models for children and building their own confidence, love of reading, well-being and pre-employment skills.

Of the young volunteers that completed a post volunteering survey:

- 88% said their confidence had increased
- 87% felt their skills had increased
- 71% said they feel they want to read more as a result of taking part
- 84% said they felt more a part of their community
- 83% said they felt they helped increase children's confidence in reading.

"Volunteering has been such a thrilling and rewarding experience, one which has most definitely improved my confidence as well as my CV!"

Jade, volunteer

"Our volunteers were so approachable, enthusiastic and friendly with the children who had signed up for the Challenge, helping them with questions and with selecting books. One volunteer enjoyed it so much that she continued her volunteering with us for her Duke of Edinburgh Award and I was delighted when she said that she wanted to extend her time with us even though she had enough community hours for her Award."

Librarian, Larbert Public Library, Falkirk

Community Engagement through Partnership Working

The Tesco Bank Summer Reading Challenge gives libraries the opportunity to work and partner with other organisations within their local area. Many of the collaborations we hear about involve libraries working with groups to target some of the most vulnerable children and families, and this is where the Challenge and libraries have the potential to make the biggest difference.

In 2016, Scottish library authorities said they had specifically targeted the following groups: children with English as an additional language; looked after children; home educated children; and children with learning or physical disabilities. More targeted initiatives involved making the Challenge accessible in small island communities or taking the Challenge into the areas of most deprivation within the authority. We hope to see this work continue into 2017.

Scottish launch and PR activity

Launch Activity

Tesco Bank entered into a partnership with the Daily Record to promote the start of the 2016 Challenge in June of this year. On 10 June the newspaper published a photograph in Glasgow's iconic Buchanan Street with children reading Dahl books in the Tesco Bank branded reading chair. They also detailed information on the Challenge itself. This was followed up on 18 June with a feature piece by Scottish author, Shari Low, reviewing several children's books, which also detailed the Challenge.

Westminster event

This year Tesco Bank joined The Reading Agency at Westminster on Wednesday 13 July for their annual MP engagement event. This was an excellent opportunity to promote the Challenge to and build relationships with the Scottish MPs and Tesco Bank's Public Affairs Manager followed up with all who attended to ensure they had all the information they required. The event was well received and resulted in a number of press articles in Scottish publications and on social media.

Holyrood event

To mark the end of the Challenge and announce the Scottish participation results, Tesco Bank hosted an engagement event for MSPs at the Scottish Parliament. Similar to the Westminster event, this provided both Tesco Bank and The Reading Agency with an excellent opportunity to promote the challenge, establish relationships with MSPs and link with their work on the First Minister's Reading Challenge which takes place during school term time. Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Education John Swinney MSP was in attendance and spoke about the importance of reading for pleasure. This event is something Tesco Bank would be keen to repeat for 2017 to further develop relationships.

Animal Agents, Summer Reading Challenge 2017

We are delighted to present the 2017 Tesco Bank Summer Reading Challenge Scotland, Animal Agents. Here, children will meet a whole host of clever creatures, ready to solve all kinds of mysterious happenings at the library. This band of furry, slippery and feathered friends is specially trained to use their skills and natural instincts to unravel clues— with a huge helping of fun along the way!

The guest illustrator will be Tony Ross, the award winning author-illustrator, known to many families through his Little Princess stories; Dr Xargle books with Jeanne Willis, the Horrid Henry series by Francesca Simon, and more recently as illustrator of some of David Walliam's novels - all with his irresistible style that children love.