

Reading Ahead 2016-17 Evaluation Report



The Reading Agency

November 2017

**READING
AHEAD**



Supported using public funding by
**ARTS COUNCIL
ENGLAND**

**THE
READING
AGENCY**

Foreword

This year we are celebrating the tenth anniversary of our Reading Ahead programme. Launched as the Six Book Challenge in 2008, it has now reached more than 275,000 people, inviting them to pick six reads of their choice and record, rate and review them in a reading diary in order to get a certificate.

Successful delivery of Reading Ahead depends upon the commitment of library staff, tutors and trade union learning reps who use it to engage people who don't think of themselves as readers or who haven't picked up a book since they left school. This year we have reached at least 38,000 young people and adults: around 7500 through public libraries working with local partners; 16,500 through further education and sixth form colleges and other learning providers; 12,000 in prisons and young offender institutions; and around 2000 in workplaces including transport companies, hospitals, local councils and logistics depots. Reading Ahead has also been used successfully as part of Read Manchester, a city-wide reading campaign.

One in six people find reading difficult. Those who take part in Reading Ahead range from young parents wanting to support their children's reading to students studying for literacy qualifications, recent immigrants learning English and prisoners who have never read a book in their lives. In the best cases Reading Ahead helps them to discover that reading can be a pleasure and draws them into a new reading habit while improving their skills at the same time. In others it opens up conversations with work colleagues, triggers a return to learning or even encourages them to write themselves.

The theme of International Literacy Day in 2017 has been 'Literacy in a Digital World'. Our aim with Reading Ahead is to inspire people to engage in texts of all kinds whether in print or digital at whatever level suits them. This can include poems, magazines, web pages and song lyrics as well as Quick Reads or longer books. The key is that they challenge themselves so that they feel a sense of achievement and increased confidence when they complete their reading diary.

As we celebrate our first decade I'd like to thank all those individuals and organisations who have supported Reading Ahead across the UK so far. It's been a rewarding and exciting journey for us all.

Genevieve Clarke
Programme Manager, The Reading Agency

November 2017

Executive Summary

1. Reading Ahead aims to encourage those who find reading difficult to explore reading for pleasure and improve their skills at the same time. It is delivered by The Reading Agency through public libraries, learning providers, prisons and young offender institutions (YOIs) and workplaces at local level across the UK.

2. This report is based on The Reading Agency's surveys of participants and organisations involved in Reading Ahead in 2016-17. It should be noted that participants completing the 'before' and 'after' surveys tend to be those who are already drawn to reading. All the surveys are attached at the end of the report.

3. Participation in the programme was found to have the following impact on 82 people who completed both a 'before' and 'after' survey:

- increased confidence in reading: 77% said that they felt they were good readers after participating in the programme compared with 60% before - an increase of 17 percentage points; 73% of all those completing the 'after' survey (176) said they felt a lot more (40%) or a little more (33%) confident about reading;
- people reading more: 56% said they now read for pleasure every or almost every day compared with 40% before – an increase of 16 percentage points; 78% of all those completing the 'after' survey (176) said they would read either a lot more (40%) or a little more (38%) after taking part in Reading Ahead;
- increased enjoyment of reading: 66% said they enjoyed reading after taking part compared with 60% before – an increase of six percentage points;
- more people reading with children: 49% said they read with children at least once a month compared with 44% before – an increase of five percentage points;
- more people talking about reading: 33% said they talk about reading compared with 26% before - an increase of seven percentage points;
- more borrowing from the library: 52% said they borrow books from the library compared to 38% before - an increase of 14 percentage points.

4. These findings were endorsed by organisations running Reading Ahead as follows based on a sample of 167 drawn from all sectors involved:

- 93% of organisations think the programme has increased their participants' reading confidence and enjoyment of reading;
- 90% felt participants were reading more after the scheme;
- 84% felt Reading Ahead improved their participants' literacy skills;
- 83% felt it helped them talk more about books and reading;
- 75% said it inspired them to use libraries more often.

5. Organisations felt that Reading Ahead had a positive impact on specific literacy skills as follows:

- more than three-quarters (77%) of organisations agreed that it had helped to enhance participants' reading skills;
- 74% felt it had enhanced communication skills;
- more than half of organisations (58% and 55% respectively) agreed it had enhanced writing and vocabulary skills.

6. Across all sectors, the gender split was roughly even: 55% male and 45% female. In public libraries, learning providers and workplaces, women are in the majority but in prisons and YOIs men make up the overwhelming majority of participants.

7. Reading Ahead reaches a wide range of age groups. Across all sectors, 77% of participants are aged 44 and under. Reflecting the involvement of learning providers and YOIs in particular, 27% of participants are aged between 16 and 19. Only 23% of participants are aged 45 or over, though this figure is much higher in workplaces and public libraries, where a more mature demographic is to be expected.

8. Across all sectors, 44% of participants are White British. A comparison with the UK Census of 2011, which reveals that 80.5% of the UK's population is White British, shows that Reading Ahead is reaching a much more ethnically diverse audience than is evident in the country as a whole. The participant base is especially diverse within public libraries (36% White British) and learning providers (38%), but less so in prisons (56%) and workplaces (87%).

9. All sectors used a wide range of reading materials beyond books to stimulate interest in Reading Ahead. Nearly half (45%) used magazines and more than a third (37%) used newspapers. A quarter used ebooks (26%), audiobooks (25%) and websites (25%), though few used digital games (3%).

10. 86% of participating organisations across all sectors anticipate running Reading Ahead again in 2017-18.

About Reading Ahead

Reading Ahead aims to encourage those who find reading difficult to explore reading for pleasure and improve their skills at the same time. Participants choose six reads – poems, magazine articles and short pieces of text, in print or online, can count as well as books – and record, review and rate them in a diary. Those completing their six reads receive a certificate and the opportunity to enter prize draws at local and national level. Prisoners who complete Reading Ahead receive a pocket dictionary or a writing or spelling guide.

Reading Ahead is delivered by The Reading Agency through public libraries, learning providers, prisons and young offender institutions (YOIs) and workplaces at local level across the UK. The programme was launched by The Reading Agency in 2008 and was known as the Six Book Challenge until 2015, when it was renamed to emphasise the fact that participants can read print and digital text as well as books to take part in the programme. Reading Ahead retains the ‘challenge’ model but the new name promotes the idea that this is the start of a journey for many people as they build their identity as readers. For more information visit <http://www.readingagency.org.uk/adults/quick-guides/reading-ahead>.

Methodology

These results are based on The Reading Agency’s surveys of participants and organisations involved in Reading Ahead between September 2017 and July 2018. The evaluation plan for Reading Ahead was produced in line with and using the Reading Agency’s Reading Outcomes Framework Toolkit (see <https://readingagency.org.uk/news/blog/reading-outcomes-framework-toolkit.html>). All the surveys are attached at the end of the report.

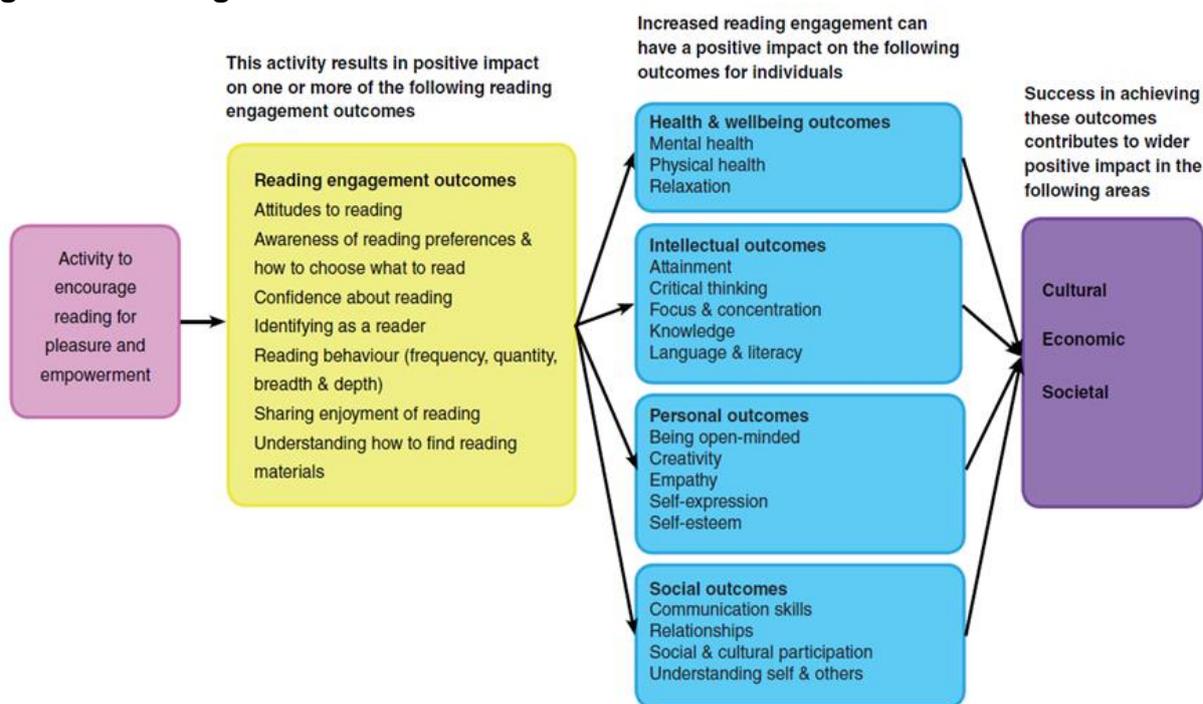
Participants were invited to complete surveys both before and after taking part in Reading Ahead. These were made available online or could be printed out for use by learners. 1,107 and 176 people completed the respective surveys, and 82 people completed both which gives us a useful ‘before’ and ‘after’ sample. These were mainly from three further education colleges and two public library services working with a local adult education partner.

The areas covered by the surveys, were as follows:

- Outcomes (mapped to the Reading Outcomes Framework below):
 - o Reading engagement outcomes:
 - Reading behaviour;
 - Identifying as a reader;
 - Confidence about reading;
 - Access to the reading environment.
 - o Social outcomes:
 - Social and cultural participation

- The context:
 - o Beneficiary demographics;
 - o The programme setting;
 - o Other reading programmes with which the beneficiary is involved.

Figure 1 Reading Outcomes Framework



Unless otherwise stated, Section 1 uses data from this group of participants. While we are able to report differences in the data before and after Reading Ahead we do not have a control group so are unable to be certain that changes occur as a direct result of Reading Ahead as opposed to another intervention or no intervention at all. Participants are encouraged to complete these surveys by library staff and tutors and it is to be expected that this group of respondents will include more confident learners who are already drawn to reading.

Table 1

Survey	Numbers completed
'Before' survey	1107
'After' survey	176
Both surveys	82

Section 2 of the report uses data from separate online surveys of organisations delivering Reading Ahead from each sector. We received responses to these surveys from 40 public library authorities (44% of the total of 90 authorities taking part); 47 learning providers (48% of the total of 97 learning providers taking part); 66 prisons and YOIs (61% of the 108 prisons and YOIs taking part); and 14 workplaces (28% of the total of 50 workplaces taking part). Caution is needed with some findings because of low sample sizes, in particular the data from workplaces. Data was collected during June and July 2017.

It should also be noted that other organisations take part but work in local partnerships with those which have signed up directly with The Reading Agency.

Table 2

	Number of organisations taking part directly with The Reading Agency	Number completing online evaluation survey
Public libraries	90	40
Learning providers	97	47
Prisons	108	66
Workplaces	50	14
Total	345	167

1 Impact on participants

Comparisons of two surveys of participants, conducted before and after their involvement in Reading Ahead, reveals the impact of the scheme on their reading attitudes, behaviour and confidence. There is ample evidence that participants are more likely to read for pleasure or with children, talk about their reading with others and buy and borrow books.

1.1 Reading for pleasure

Respondents to our surveys tend to be those who are already drawn to reading. When asked whether they enjoyed reading, 60% of those starting Reading Ahead said they agreed a lot. But in a second survey conducted after they had taken part, the proportion of the same sample who agreed a lot had risen to 66%—an increase of six percentage points.

It has made me enjoy reading and feel more confident. (Participant)

Similarly the Reading Agency's 'before' survey found that 40% of participants read for pleasure every or almost every day. But by the time of the second survey after Reading Ahead the figure stood at 56%—an increase of 16 percentage points.

It's got me back into just switching off the TV for a few hours every day so I can sit and read in peace. (Participant)

1.2 Reading confidence

Asked to agree or disagree a little or a lot that they were good readers, 60% of participants agreed either a little or a lot before getting involved in Reading Ahead. Again this reflects the fact that more confident participants tend to complete our surveys. Asked *after* the scheme, 77% of the same sample agreed a little or a lot—an increase of 17 percentage points.

I think the Reading Ahead challenge helps people a lot with confidence. (Participant)

Several participants indicated that their increased confidence in reading had led them to broaden their reading or taking on more challenging books.

I read a lot anyway, but it has made me think about what I read and try different types of books. (Participant)

A number of respondents said Reading Ahead had specifically helped them improve their English language skills.

My English is much better than before. Now I have confidence when reading and writing about books. (Participant)

Among *all* participants answering the post-Reading Ahead survey—and not just those who completed the pre-challenge survey too—nearly three-quarters felt either a lot more confident (33%) or a little more confident (40%) about reading than before they took part.

The rest were either a little less confident (1%), a lot less confident (1%) or about the same as before (26%).

1.3 Engaging with reading

Asked about their reading intentions after taking part in Reading Ahead, more than three-quarters of all participants thought they would read either a lot more (40%) or a little more (38%). A very small number (2%) thought they would read less, and 21% thought they would read about the same amount.

It has made me read more. (Participant)

Reading Ahead has also encouraged some participants to read more with children. Among participants who completed surveys both before and after taking part in Reading Ahead, the proportion saying they read with children at least once a month rose from 44% beforehand to 49% afterwards—an increase of five percentage points.

I feel more confident reading with my son. (Participant)

There is also evidence that Reading Ahead helps participants to talk about their reading more often. Before the survey, 26% of participants said they talked about their reading with other people at least once a week, but after Reading Ahead 33% of the same sample said they did so—an increase of seven percentage points. This is partly a consequence of group participation in Reading Ahead, especially within learning providers.

I am more confident in talking to people about my reading. (Participant)

I have so enjoyed the group and meeting other people—we all help each other with our reading achievements. I never ever thought I would be part of a book club, and it's been good for my morale. (Participant)

1.4 Borrowing books

There are signs that Reading Ahead is encouraging many participants to borrow books from libraries. It makes Reading Ahead an important part of the book industry's long-term efforts to increase book sales and loans to previously light or reluctant readers.

It will get me to read more—I don't tend to read that much, but I am going to read more from now on. (Participant)

The increase in numbers borrowing books is significant. Before taking part in Reading Ahead, 38% of participants said they borrowed books from libraries at least once a month, but after taking part the proportion among the same sample was 52%—an increase of 14 percentage points. This reflects the hard work of public libraries to encourage people to take part in Reading Ahead, and in many cases to sign them up to library membership in order to do so.

I didn't use the library before, but now I use it to borrow books. (Participant)

1.5 Buying books

There is less evidence that participants have bought more books since becoming involved in Reading Ahead. Before taking part, 43% of participants said they never bought books, but afterwards the proportion among the same sample was 35%—an increase of eight percentage points. Numbers buying books at least once a month fell slightly, however, from 24% before Reading Ahead to 23% afterwards—perhaps because these people were borrowing more books from libraries instead.

1.5 Participants' skills and habits

As shown in Table 3 below, the public libraries, learning providers, workplaces and prisons and YOIs involved in Reading Ahead are overwhelmingly positive about its impact on participants' literacy skills and reading habits.¹

More than nine in ten (93%) organisations think Reading Ahead increased their participants' reading confidence and enjoyment of reading. Nearly as many felt participants were reading more after the scheme. More than three-quarters of organisations felt Reading Ahead improved their participants' literacy skills (84%), helped them talk more about books and reading (83%) and inspired them to use libraries more often (75%), though there was less unanimity about the scheme's impact on attitudes to learning.

Table 3

	Strongly agree / agree	Not sure	Strongly disagree / disagree
Increased reading confidence	93%	7%	1%
Increased enjoyment of reading	93%	7%	0%
Reading more	90%	10%	0%
Improved literacy skills	84%	15%	1%
Talking more about books and reading	83%	17%	0%
Using the library more often	75%	25%	0%
Improved attitude to learning	66%	34%	0%

Tutors tell us that Reading Ahead is a great way to engage learners in reading'. (Public library)

Students continued to borrow books after they had completed Reading Ahead' (Learning provider)

¹ Figures here are collated from all four sectors taking part in Reading Ahead: public libraries, learning providers, workplaces and prisons and YOIs.

As shown in Table 4 below, Reading Ahead had a positive impact on specific literacy skills. More than three-quarters (77%) of organisations agreed that it had helped to enhance participants’ reading skills, and nearly as many (74%) felt it had enhanced communication skills. The impact on writing and vocabulary skills was not quite so pronounced, but more than half of organisations (58% and 55% respectively) agreed it had enhanced skills here too.

A definite increase in reading confidence. (Learning provider)

Table 4

	Strongly agree / agree	Not sure	Strongly disagree / disagree
Enhanced reading skills	77%	21%	1%
Enhanced communication skills	74%	24%	2%
Enhanced writing skills	58%	41%	1%
Enhanced vocabulary skills	55%	43%	1%

These figures reinforce participants’ own views that Reading Ahead has had a positive impact on numerous aspects of their literacy and skills.

Participants who were afraid to read out loud are not afraid to do so now. (Learning provider)

Definitely gets them talking and increases confidence. (Prison / YOI)

Everybody enjoys reading and talking about it. (Workplace)

1.6 Gender of participants²

As shown in Table 5, the gender split of Reading Ahead participants varies substantially by the sector in which they take part.

Across all sectors, the gender split was roughly even: 55% male and 45% female. In public libraries, learning providers and workplaces, women are in the majority—by a substantial margin in some cases. But in prisons and YOIs men make up the overwhelming majority of participants.

² Data in this and following sections is drawn from surveys completed by organisations delivering Reading Ahead, rather than from surveys of participants. Gender questions included the options of male, female and trans*, but trans* numbers are low so do not show in the percentages.

Table 5

	Male	Female
Public libraries	30%	70%
Learning providers	43%	57%
Prisons / YOIs	96%	4%
Workplaces	28%	72%
All sectors	55%	45%

1.7 Age

Table 6 shows how the age ranges of participants vary by sector too.

Across all sectors, 77% of participants are aged 44 years or under. Reflecting the involvement of learning providers and YOIs in particular, 27% of participants are aged between 16 and 19. Only 23% of participants are aged 45 or over, though this figure is much higher in workplaces and public libraries, where a more mature demographic is to be expected. Put together, the four sectors of public libraries, learning providers, workplaces and prisons and YOIs mean that Reading Ahead can access a very wide age range.

Table 6

	16-19	20-24	25-44	45-64	65-74	75+
Public libraries	12%	10%	42%	29%	4%	1%
Learning providers	51%	17%	24%	7%	1%	0%
Prisons / YOIs	6%	21%	42%	25%	5%	1%
Workplaces	6%	6%	38%	49%	1%	0%
All sectors	27%	16%	34%	19%	3%	0%

1.8 Ethnicity

As shown in Table 7, the ethnicity of Reading Ahead also changes by sector.

Across all sectors, 44% of participants are White British. A comparison with the UK Census of 2011, which reveals that 80.5% of the UK's population is White British, shows that Reading Ahead is reaching a much more ethnically diverse audience than is evident in the country as a whole.

The participant base is especially diverse within public libraries and learning providers, where White British people make up only 36% and 38% of participants respectively. Diversity is less apparent within workplaces and prisons and YOIs, where White British participants are in the majority.

Table 7

	White British	Other White	Asian / British Asian	Black / Black British	Mixed / dual heritage	Other ethnic group
Public libraries	36%	14%	18%	12%	7%	14%
Learning providers	38%	17%	19%	13%	3%	11%
Prisons / YOIs	56%	6%	13%	15%	7%	2%
Workplaces	87%	8%	2%	1%	0%	1%
All sectors	44%	13%	17%	13%	5%	9%

2 Impact on organisations

As well as improving participants' literacy skills, Reading Ahead has had a positive impact on the public libraries, learning providers, workplaces, prisons and YOIs that deliver it. This section highlights some of the main benefits to Reading Ahead's partner organisations.

2.1 Public libraries

Reading Ahead has a positive impact on public library membership. The Reading Agency's library survey estimates that 19% of those taking part in Reading Ahead through public libraries joined a library in order to do so. Some of these new members might not otherwise have encountered library services.

Reading Ahead is the main tool for engaging with some of the harder to reach communities, and helps us build a relationship with people who may not generally feel comfortable in the library. Some of the participants become regular library users, enrolling their children and attending other events. (Public library)

Library authorities worked with a range of partners to deliver Reading Ahead. Of these, the most common are adult education services, with whom 63% of libraries partnered, followed by ESOL providers (40%) and FE colleges (33%). Other partners included groups with disabilities (28%), family learning services (20%), schools (13%), Workers' Educational Association (13%), children's centres (13%), mental health groups (13%) and workplaces (8%). The diverse range of services shows how valuable Reading Ahead has become in helping libraries establish new partnerships.

Reading Ahead has allowed us to develop partnerships with local ESOL tutors. (Public library)

Reading Ahead has become an established and highly valued part of the public library service. More than nine in ten (93%) library services now include Reading Ahead in their action or delivery plans. Nearly as many (89%) link Reading Ahead to one or both of the public library Universal Offers in England.

It helps the library to meet the Universal Offers and encourages non-readers to join and use their local library. (Public library)

Many public library services link Reading Ahead to other reading programmes. 73% of survey respondents say they link it to the Quick Reads initiative, and smaller numbers link it to World Book Night (10%), Reading Well Books on Prescription and Reading Well Mood Boosting Books (10%). These links all help to promote Reading Ahead to adults.

It illustrates how committed public libraries are to improving literacy for not just children but adults too. (Public library)

2.2 Learning providers

The learning providers that run Reading Ahead are mainly further education colleges, along with a small number of sixth form colleges, schools and a few local authority adult education services who purchase print materials directly from The Reading Agency. These organisations work through a variety of internal partners to deliver Reading Ahead, with activity usually focused on the college library (74%). Library staff then link with ESOL tutors (66%), functional skills tutors (45%), supported learning tutors (45%), GCSE tutors (28%) and public libraries (11%) to support the programme.

Reading Ahead is very valuable to our organisation. We have engaged with certain learners who would not otherwise visit the library, and it gives us the opportunity to link across the college and the curriculum. (Learning provider)

Nearly half (48%) of learning providers now include Reading Ahead in their action or delivery plans.

Many readers have found reading to be relaxing and de-stressing from busy academic lives at college. (Learning provider)

Four in five (80%) learning providers feel Reading Ahead has strengthened the college library's offer to learners.

It's really valuable because it widens learners' experience, sets them on the road to self-improvement and offers so much more than the exam-based syllabus. (Learning provider)

Many learning providers link Reading Ahead to other reading initiatives, including Quick Reads (77%), World Book Night (40%) and the Reading Well Books on Prescription and Reading Well Mood Boosting Books schemes (17%).

Reading Ahead has helped ESOL students to understand English much faster. Many who completed Reading Ahead this year were unable to speak, read or write English at the start of the year. (Learning provider)

2.3 Prisons and YOIs

Reading Ahead has become very well established and highly valued in and by library services in prisons and YOIs. More than half (59%) of prisons and YOIs now include Reading Ahead in their action or delivery plans.

The challenge is part of the fabric of this prison library. It reaches men who might not otherwise choose to read, and the joy of rediscovering and developing reading is hugely rewarding for lots of guys—and consequently for us. It's such a positive programme. (Prison / YOI)

More than four in five (84%) prisons and YOIs feel Reading Ahead has strengthened the prison library's offer to learners.

It gives offenders something positive to focus on and time spent reading keeps them occupied. (Prison / YOI)

Library services in prisons and YOIs work with a variety of internal partners to deliver Reading Ahead. The most common partners are education tutors (64%) with smaller numbers working with wings (30%), workshops (18%) and healthcare teams (11%). More than half (55%) of survey respondents think Reading Ahead has helped them establish more partnerships in their prisons or YOIs.

Reading Ahead has been really useful for the library to promote our services, encourage attendance and increase our links with other departments. (Prison / YOI)

Many prisons and YOIs link Reading Ahead to other initiatives, including Quick Reads (55%), Turning Pages (48%), Prison Reading Groups (42%), World Book Night (37%), Storybook Dads (22%) and the Reading Well Books on Prescription and Reading Well Mood Boosting Books (12%) schemes.

In an establishment where self-harm and suicide levels are running at an all-time high, I can think of no better scheme than Reading Ahead that promotes the rewarding world of books and reading. (Prison / YOI)

2.4 Workplaces

Workplaces running Reading Ahead include hospitals, travel companies, logistics depots, supermarkets and council workforces. Low responses to the survey of workplaces participating in Reading Ahead (28% of those taking part) mean results here need to be treated with caution.

More than half (58%) of participating workplaces agreed that Reading Ahead had improved their learning offer to staff.

It offers people a chance to start reading more for enjoyment—the excuse to take some ‘me’ time. (Workplace)

The survey indicates that workplaces work with various partners on Reading Ahead, with trade unions, workplace learning centres and public libraries the most commonly used. Many workplaces link Reading Ahead to Quick Reads, and several to World Book Night.

It has rekindled an interest in reading and our reading groups, and has had the knock-on effect of forging friendships. (Workplace)

2.5 Future delivery

Across all sectors, 86% of participating organisations anticipate running Reading Ahead again in 2017-18. Only 2% of organisations say they will not run it again, and a further 12% are not sure. Many of these cite budget or resource constraints for their hesitation.

It has been such a success over the past four years that I couldn't imagine *not* running Reading Ahead! (Prison / YOI)

2.6 Reading materials used

Libraries, colleges, workplaces, prisons and YOIs all used a wide range of reading materials beyond books to stimulate interest in Reading Ahead. Across all sectors, nearly half of them (45%) used magazines and more than a third (37%) used newspapers. A quarter used ebooks (26%), audiobooks (25%) and websites (25%), though few used digital games (3%).

Participating organisations cited many other sources of reading materials, including poems, apps, posters, recipes, leaflets and bus timetables. Beyond Quick Reads, reading materials that were reported to have worked particularly well included basic-level books like Gatehouse, Barrington Stoke and Books Beyond Words titles, graphic novels, books with CDs, young adult novels, multicultural books, self-help books and, in prisons, Shannon Trust titles.

Conclusions

This analysis of The Reading Agency's surveys, together with comments from individuals and organisations, shows the impact of Reading Ahead on the lives of its participants.

*I didn't know how much I love to read until I took part in Reading Ahead.
(Participant)*

There is substantial evidence that Reading Ahead increases people's reading skills and confidence. It encourages people to read for pleasure more often, inspires reluctant and lapsed readers to return to books and other content, and prompts those with more confidence to widen their reading horizons.

A really positive experience. (Learning provider)

Reading Ahead's impact goes beyond reading. In many cases, participation in the challenge improves communication, writing and vocabulary skills, and is particularly valuable to those learning the English language. The shared experience of Reading Ahead prompts participants to talk more about books too, and to borrow more titles from libraries.

*I'm in an ESOL class, and I start to understand more things when I read—that makes me borrow more books and enjoy reading.
(Participant)*

Reading Ahead reaches a very broad range of demographics. Libraries welcome participants from numerous ethnic backgrounds and age groups, learning providers support young adults in particular, and prisons and YOIs reach men who might not otherwise encounter reading opportunities.

Any chance to improve basic standards of literacy is a game-changer as far as I am concerned, and with the aid of this challenge we move mountains. (Prison / YOI)

The value of Reading Ahead is recognised by many libraries, learning providers, workplaces, prisons and YOIs, for whom it has become an integral part of plans and an effective way of delivering key aims. It reinforces their offer to users and helps them establish and strengthen important partnerships.

Reading Ahead continues to be a great way of kickstarting reading for pleasure. (Public library)