Reading Ahead for prisons during Covid-19

This toolkit contains resources and ideas for adults (aged 16+) who are less confident readers or learning English as an additional language. Reading for pleasure positively impacts wellbeing, our ability to understand the world and those around us and to adapt to change. With prison libraries temporarily closed we want to provide as much support as we can to enable you to keep connected to readers and to promote the importance of reading for pleasure.

If you would like to connect with others who run Reading Ahead we have set up a ['Reading Ahead 2019/20' Facebook group](https://www.facebook.com/groups/531802711053927/) to use as a space to share ideas and challenges. Any news or resources will be shared in the group and in the [**resources database**](https://readingagency.org.uk/resources/?programme=ahead) as usual.

If you have any difficulties joining or would like to contact us directly please do! Email lily.staunton-howe@readingagency.org.uk. All requests and feedback are welcome. We’re also happy to share and amplify the great things you’ve already been doing.

The Prisons Jiscmail has been gathering information from prison library staff and has started sending out regular updates.  If you would like to get these or have news to share please contact John Vincent at john@nadder.org.uk.

Reading Ahead core resources

We realise that the situation in every prison is different but are hoping that many of you may be able to keep Reading Ahead going for your readers as a simple framework for getting them reading and offering some comfort and distraction.

Our [shop has reopened](https://shop.readingagency.org.uk/) for anyone able to make use of physical resources or to order ready for when the library reopens. Please note that 2019/20 resources will remain the same up until Autumn this year as we are aware that you may have printed materials still to use up.

If you have completers already and are able to print and distribute certificates we have editable versions here: [https://readingagency.org.uk/adults/reading-ahead-download-digital-certificate.html](https://urldefense.proofpoint.com/v2/url?u=https-3A__readingagency.org.uk_adults_reading-2Dahead-2Ddownload-2Ddigital-2Dcertificate.html&d=DwMF-g&c=OMjwGp47Ad5otWI0__lpOg&r=6taf2cOLl1PdkEA2NNLZJ1LsDfpeSkY-EpRhHwDQVMo&m=-qhKbeQcxFNz41ut5rNGf8Nr-3eo6XltLN8qUEWwfO8&s=GRvCus_crptESetA1d53cCDYzSc34XK8mitKlnMnce0&e=)

A few thoughts from The Reading Agency’s prisons manager:

* Give people their reading diaries to keep if they’re prepared to fill them in.
* Ask library orderlies to spread the word to get more participants started while they can.
* Encourage people to share books – you’ll know whether it’s safe to do this.
* Remind them that they can read shorter texts, e.g. poems, magazine articles, as well as books.
* Suggest that someone keeps a tally of completers on each wing if they can.
* Encourage peer to peer support – activity reps and library orderlies can help to promote, support and record progress for Reading Ahead.

Digital reading activities and booklists

Every prison is facing unique situations and challenges at the moment which might mean that not all of these resources will be applicable to the access or support that you have to get resources out the wings. However, we hope you will be able to find some useful resources and inspiration from the below.

* **Creative activities for using with Reading Ahead** <https://readingagency.org.uk/resources/3146/>

These seven documents, created by David Kendall, provide a wide range of activities for using alongside Reading Ahead designed for prisoners with English as a Second Language or Additional Language.

* **This Is Going To Hurt (Quick Reads) diary writing challenge**

<https://readingagency.org.uk/resources/4423/>

This activity sheet has been designed to use alongside reading the Quick Reads version of Adam Kay’s This Is Going To Hurt. It provides inspiration and a framework for starting a diary.

* **Words and Memories: Creative writing by ESOL learners** <https://readingagency.org.uk/resources/3122/>

This collection of writing by prisoners whose first language is not English was produced over the course of six workshops in three UK prisons – HMP Downview, HMP High Down and HMP Thameside – between May and July 2018.

* **Quick Reads reader guides and discussion questions for 2020** <https://readingagency.org.uk/resources/4129/>

If you’re able to distribute Quick Reads to the wings you could also distribute these reading guides and discussion cards. Quick Reads are suitable for all readers particularly less confident readers around Level 2. They can be used both as a first read for Reading Ahead or to work towards to as a final goal, depending on the starting level of participants.

* **Quick Reads learning resource packs for titles prior to 2020**

<https://readingagency.org.uk/resources/?programme=quick-reads&page=1>

Scroll down through the Quick Reads resources page to find learning resource packs for a range of different Quick Reads. These packs include discussion questions and activities related to the books.

* **Reading Well list:** [Overcoming Health Anxiety](https://thereadingagency.sharepoint.com/%3Aw%3A/g/EUEICCV5e8NEr6u-FHJkv24BgqCJdostu8SV5_zJVFfB9w?e=VZyPvQ) on the Reading Well list might be useful during this uncertain time.
* **Making Reading Ahead work for prisoners with ESOL** <https://readingagency.org.uk/resources/4055/>

This guide was put together by The Reading Agency in partnership with The Bell Foundation.

* **Booklists for ESOL learners and less confident readers** <https://readingagency.org.uk/resources/3149/>

Here are two booklists compiled as part of the Reading Ahead with ESOL in prisons project funded by The Bell Foundation together with some guidance provided by NATECLA.

* **If you can get newspapers and magazines out to wings**

Accompany with resources on ‘Real versus fake news’

The BBC Academy: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/academy/en/articles/art20180307163518942>

The British Council: <https://learnenglish.britishcouncil.org/skills/reading/intermediate-b1/how-to-spot-fake-news>

Creative writing & drawing activities

* **Penned By A Prisoner Daily Writing Challenge created by HMP Brixton**

Days 1 – 10: <https://readingagency.org.uk/resources/4329/>

Days 11 – 20: <https://readingagency.org.uk/resources/4368/>

Days 21 – 30: <https://readingagency.org.uk/resources/4405/>

The Penned By A Prisoner daily writing challenge has been created by HMP Brixton.

Tweet #PennedByAPrisoner to share writing.

* **Penned By A Prisoner Drawing Challenge**

Challenge 1: <https://readingagency.org.uk/resources/4330/>

Challenge 2: <https://readingagency.org.uk/resources/4367/>

This drawing challenge for those who struggle with literacy and/ or prefer art has been created by HMP Brixton. Tweet #PennedByAPrisoner to share art.

* **ESOL creative writing pack**

<https://readingagency.org.uk/resources/3123/>

This is a pack of guidance for running creative writing workshops in prison for those whose first language is not English. It includes a powerpoint, notes for workshop leaders, guidance for workshop assistants and several handouts for participants.

* **The Wilbur & Niso Smith Adventure Writing resources** <https://readingagency.org.uk/resources/3820/>

The Reading Agency worked with The Wilbur & Niso Smith Foundation to create these resources to promote adventure writing. They are mainly targeted at students in further education who may also be taking part in Reading Ahead.

* **Prison Learning Alliance In-cell activity hub**

<https://prisonerlearningalliance.org.uk/our-work/in-cell-activity-hub/>

**#InCellActivity**

* **Lesson plans developed by the British Council**

<https://esol.britishcouncil.org/content/teachers/teaching-english-for-work/offender-learning>

* **Activity sheets by illustrator Emily Fox**

<http://www.emilyafox.co.uk/activities.html>

* **Comics and drawing activity sheets by author and illustrator David O’Connell**

<http://davidoconnell.uk/activities/comics-drawing/>

* **Writing tips and resources by author Tom Palmer**

<https://tompalmer.co.uk/free-stuff/>

* **Wordsearches and activity sheets by publisher Barrington Stoke**

<https://www.barringtonstoke.co.uk/product-category/free-resources/?swoof=1&product_cat=activity-sheets&really_curr_tax=444-product_cat>

* **Printable puzzles for adults**

<https://crosswordpuzzles-printable.com/printable-puzzles-adults/>

Social media

* **Downloadable Quick Reads social media assets**

<https://readingagency.org.uk/resources/?programme=quick-reads>

* **Follow #FreeResources #LearningAtHome for more resources**

Keep up to date with The Reading Agency news:

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CILIP Prison Libraries Group: <https://www.cilip.org.uk/members/group_content_view.asp?group=201309&id=691326>

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Connect with other prisons on social media:





