



# Reading dares learning resource

Classroom activity plan  
designed to inspire children to  
engage with reading in new  
and exciting ways

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Key Area: 2.3.2, 2.3.3

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Level: Core

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Resource created by  
Scottish Book Trust

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Reading  
Schools

**Scottish  
Book Trust**  
inspiring readers and writers

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## About this resource

This lesson plan and resource challenges you and your learners to undertake reading dares. To motivate children to read, it's important to try and create a personal reading journey for them; this lesson plan can increase their awareness of their likes and dislikes, as well as their knowledge of the diverse range of books available. For instance, they can dare each other to try graphic novels, autobiographies, picture books for older readers and books based on video games.

Dares can also help children attach a sense of fun to reading and uncouple it from the context of assessed work. By encouraging children to choose a dare that they find interesting, achievable and enjoyable, you can help to set them on the path to becoming lifelong readers.

These activities when working towards your Reading Schools accreditation to meet Key Areas 2.3.2 Meaningful conversations about books and 2.3.3 Creating social networks.

# Collaborative reading dares activity

LIT 1-11a/LIT 2-11a, LIT 3-11a, LIT 1-01a/LIT 2-01a, LIT 3-01a, LIT 1-02a, LIT 2-02a, LIT 3-02a

Before you begin the group activity, have a discussion with your class about their reading habits and the kinds of texts they enjoy and would recommend to others. Discuss the importance of challenging themselves and having as much fun with reading as possible.

Explain to your pupils that they are going to work together to write their own reading dares to challenge themselves and others in their class, including their teacher! Talk about how you could make the challenges fun and encourage people to want to take part. Discuss the meaning of the word 'dare' and you can use our list of suggested reading dares (at the end of this resource). The dares they make up can be as creative and entertaining as they like as long as they are achievable, have an element of challenge and encourage people to engage with books and reading!

Print the categorised word lists provided on page 3 onwards of this resource (you can adapt them as you wish). The words are divided into the following 9 categories: places; times; people; clothes; genres/subjects; adjectives; things; amounts, and verbs. The idea is to arrange them in separate pots for pupils to pick from.

Divide your pupils into groups (3, 4 or 5 would be ideal) and provide them with a large sheet of paper to write down their dare ideas. Explain that they will receive 3 pots containing words with different themes; they can take it in turns to pick a word from each of the pots and use them as inspiration to write an interesting reading dare. They can choose to involve one or more of the words depending on the scenario and how creative they want to be! Once they have used some of those themed words, they can move around the classroom in a carousel approach or simply swap their theme pots with another team.

At the end of the group task, pupils can write out their ideas for a class reading dare box. They can pick out dares for themselves or others and record their achievements in a class book or photo display.

## **Differentiation for less confident pupils**

If you want to have more control over the dares that pupils undertake, you can use the list of suggested reading dares at the end of this resource.

Many of these dares can be set for a whole class, meaning every pupil undertakes the same dare. This can work well for less confident pupils, or as a precursor to pupils coming up with their own dares.

<b>People</b>			
teacher	sidekick	grandparent	librarian
Harry Potter	hero	villain	head teacher
Hagrid	child	sibling	Shopkeeper
Gollum	best friend	neighbour	Sherlock Holmes
Peter Pan	hairdresser	mechanic	superhero
Frodo	pirate	sports person	parent
Santa Claus	spy	bus driver	detective

<b>Times</b>			
weekday	morning	Saturday	months of the year
Sunday	every day	half an hour	days of the week
Wednesday	middle of the night	Tuesday	10 minutes
1 minute	night	every hour	15 minutes
before bed	before breakfast	Monday	evening
weekend	hours of the day	Thursday	Friday
afternoon	lunchtime	30 seconds	3 days

<b>Things<sup>1</sup></b>		
treasure	teddy bear	Pokémon
flag	pavement	LEGO
matchsticks	megaphone	rainbow
map	foot	bus
cardboard	glass	bubble wrap
duvet	post box	train
car	mug	television
chart	Internet	bookmark
game	list	poster
scene	sign	review

<b>Clothes</b>		
socks	woolly hat	coat
jumper	top hat	bag
tartan	costume	t shirt
shoes	disguise	dress
mask	tie	skirt

<sup>1</sup> We've highlighted in red the items which you may want to leave out if you want your pupils to think more creatively. These items are mainly examples of common texts that pupils can produce: they are therefore intended as a support for the less confident, but you may want to delete them and leave empty boxes in the table if you want to challenge your pupils to do more of the thinking.

<b>Places</b>		
island	Europe	shop
cinema	library	room
school	supermarket	day out
home	cafe	Africa
local shop	post office	train station
lunch hall	Arctic/Antarctic	America
street	pavement	park
sports centre	beach	mountain
garden centre	museum	bookshop

<b>Genres/subjects</b>		
horror	blog	sci-fi
newspaper	adventure	poetry
magazine	guide	picture book
short story	travel	craft
true crime	biography	crime

<b>Verbs<sup>2</sup></b>		
wear	discover	hate
experiment	speak	make
eat	cook	relax
volunteer	recommend	upcycle
dance	cycle	hide
run	leave	give
share	shout	build
sing	skip	climb
read	loan	swap
find	decorate	write
draw	read out	perform
pretend	make up	watch

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<sup>2</sup> We've highlighted in red the items which you may want to leave out if you want your pupils to do a bit more thinking. These items are examples of actions which are very commonly associated with reading and books: they are therefore intended as a support for the less confident, but you may want to delete them and leave empty boxes in the table if you want to challenge your pupils to do more of the thinking.

<b>Amounts</b>		
50 words	140 characters	1 page
10cm	small	massive
metre	big	tiny
mile	tall	short
100 pages	5 words	long
10 pages	50 pages	heavy

<b>Adjectives</b>		
fun	angry	excited
silly	safe	afraid
secretive	happy	thoughtful
lonely	content	sad
surprised	confused	boring



# Suggested reading dares

In the main reading dares lesson plan (above), children are tasked with coming up with their own dares. However, if you want to have a bit more control over what pupils are daring each other to do, you can provide them with some of the example dares listed here.

There are a number of different options available to you in using this resource:

- You can ask your whole class/book group to do the same dare;
- You can ask individual children to choose a dare;
- This can be a precursor to children coming up with their own dares, if this is the right option for your group.

We've divided the suggested dares into different categories, but there's obviously lots of overlap between the categories.

## Primary

Find a poem that makes you laugh

Visit the library and ask for a recommendation

Guerilla poetry - hide poems/quotes around your school for people to find

Read a book that helps you to learn a new skill

Recommend your favourite book to a teacher

Watch a film based on a book

Read the book your favourite film is based on

Stand up in assembly and share a book recommendation

Visit your library and borrow a book written by someone with the same first name or initials as you

Learn a poem by heart

Read a comic/graphic novel

Write a story about your friends

Take a book out of the library and start reading it straight away – finish this evening!

Dare your parent or guardian to read your favourite book, and in return you read one they suggest

Draw a picture of how you imagine your favourite character from a book to look

Write a song about your favourite character/book

Write a letter to your favourite book character

Read the ending first in the next book you'll read

Read instead of watching TV for a week

Read first thing in the morning during for a week

Recommend a book to a relative of another generation.

Don't say no to your younger sibling's request of read-aloud stories all week

Volunteer to read out a page from your book to the rest of the class

Volunteer to tidy your class or school library

Put a sign on your desk saying what you're reading right now

Read a book set in a country you would like to go to

Have a book group at school and share your favourites

Read a book featuring your favourite sport or activity

Recommend a book to a family member

Read a book recommended by a family member (maybe your grandad or grandma)

Read a spooky story at night time

Do a book swap with a friend

Write a deleted scene for your favourite film or TV series

Read an illustrated book

Write a note to an anonymous reader, put it in a book and leave the book somewhere for a person to find

Without your teacher knowing, include a quote from a book in class

Re-enact your favourite scene from a book

Re-write your favourite scene from a TV show and get friends to read it out/act it out.

Write an article about the top five computer games with great storylines.

Write a comic based on your favourite computer game or film

Read a comic that isn't about superheroes

Find a book you liked when you were younger and read it again

Read the first page of five different books and read the one you like best

Borrow a book for one of your friends

Run a book of the month scheme in your class

Find a wordless picture book and share it with someone younger than you

Spend 15 minutes every day reading

Perform a poem to your class

Read a comic book then have a go at writing your own comic strip featuring the same characters

Read a newspaper article

Write to an author whose work you enjoy

Make and wear a T-shirt celebrating your favourite book

Bury a time capsule with your favourite book in it, write a note to the person who'll dig it up one day saying why you love it

Bake fairy cakes and decorate them with book titles/quotes/pictures

Pretend to be a famous book character for a day and see if anyone guesses what you're doing.

Design an alternative book cover for one of your favourites.

In the library, keeping your eyes closed (or with a blindfold!)- have a friend spin you round and pick a book without looking. This is the next book you will read!

Find a kind, funny or inspiring quote in a book you like, write it in your best handwriting and put in a place where you will see it daily. Every day you will look at this and be reminded of something good. If you find more than one quote, write them all out- you could even draw a picture to go with them!

Make a poster to advertise your favourite book

Make up a joke about a favourite book or character and tell it to a friend.

Put together or make a collection of objects which could belong to a character from a book. See if your friends can guess the character!

Make your own reading den either at home or at school and take a photo of it.

Sneak up to someone while they are reading a book and try and read a whole page without them noticing!

Write a piece of fanfiction based on your favourite book.

Walk around your school playing a game of I Spy, but the only items you can spy have to be from a book you know. For example, if you see a teacup (like in *Alice in Wonderland*), or toy/picture of a fairy (like in *Peter Pan*)

Use a quote from your favourite book in everyday conversation and see if anyone notices!

Call your teacher, a member of your family or a friend the name of a favourite book character for a day

## Secondary

Find a poem that makes you laugh

Visit the library and ask for a recommendation

Guerilla poetry - hide poems/quotes around your school for people to find

Read an autobiography

Read a book that helps you to learn a new skill

Decorate your classroom door as a book cover

Organise a reading flashmob in your school

Share a 'bookface' selfie

Watch one of Scottish Book Trust's Authors Live events

Recommend your favourite book to a teacher

Watch a film based on a book

Read the book your favourite film is based on

Post a list of your top five books on social media

Speak only in Harry Potter quotes for an hour

Stand up in assembly and share a book recommendation

Visit your school library and borrow a book written by someone with the same first name or initials as you

Learn a poem by heart

Read a comic/graphic novel

Read a book which has caused controversy or been banned somewhere in the world

Watch one a performance poets on YouTube

Take a book out of the library and start reading it straight away – finish this evening!

Dare your parent or guardian to read your favourite book, and in return you read one they suggest

Write a song about your favourite character/book

Read the ending first in the next book you'll read

Read instead of watching TV for a week

Read first thing in the morning for a week

Recommend a book to a relative of another generation

Don't say no to your younger sibling's request of read-aloud stories all week

Volunteer to read out a page from your book to the rest of the class

Volunteer to tidy your class or school library

Put a sign on your desk saying what you're reading right now

Read a book set in a country you would like to go to

Have a book group at school and share your favourites

Read a book featuring your favourite sport or activity

Recommend a book to a family member

Read a book recommended by a family member (maybe your grandad or grandma)

Read a spooky story at night time

Do a book swap with a friend

Write a deleted scene for your favourite film or TV series

Read an illustrated book

Do a YouTube/social media book review

Write a note to an anonymous reader, put it in a book and leave the book somewhere for a person to find

Without your teacher knowing, include a quote from a book in class

Re-enact your favourite scene from a book in your drama class

Re-write your favourite scene from a TV show and get friends to read it out/act it out.

Write an article about the top five computer games with great storylines.

Write a comic based on your favourite computer game or film

Read a comic that isn't about superheroes

Find a book you liked when you were younger and read it again

Read the first page of five different books and read the one you like best

Hold an extreme reading competition

Hold a lucky book dip

Borrow a book for one of your friends

Run a book of the month scheme in your class

Find a wordless picture book and share it with someone younger than you

Spend 15 minutes every day reading

Perform a poem to your class

Read a comic book then have a go at writing your own comic strip featuring the same characters

Read a newspaper article

Write to an author whose work you enjoy

Make and wear a T-shirt celebrating your favourite book

Bury a time capsule with your favourite book in it, write a note to the person who'll dig it up one day saying why you love it

Bake fairy cakes and decorate them with book titles/quotes/pictures

Design an alternative book cover for one of your favourites

In the library, keeping your eyes closed (or with a blindfold!)- have a friend spin you round and pick a book without looking. This is the next book you will read!

Ask some of your teachers to bring in photos of their bookshelves and make a quiz

Find a kind, funny or inspiring quote in a book you like, write it in your best handwriting and put in a place where you will see it daily. Every day you will look at this and be reminded of something good. If you find more than one quote, write them all out- you could even draw a picture to go with them!

Make a poster to advertise your favourite book

Make your own reading den either at home or at school and take a photo of it

Sneak up to someone while they are reading a book and try and read a whole page without them noticing!

Write a piece of fanfiction based on your favourite book

Use a quote from your favourite book in everyday conversation and see if anyone notices!

Think of a funny book title pun – have a competition in your class!

Call your teacher, a member of your family or a friend the name of a favourite book character for a day

Make a recommendations box for your classroom – you could take it round to other classes too!

## **Less confident readers**

Visit the library and ask for a recommendation

Read an autobiography

Read a book that helps you to learn a new skill

Decorate your classroom door as a book cover

Watch one of Scottish Book Trust's Authors Live events

Watch a film based on a book

Read the book your favourite film is based on

Read a comic/graphic novel

Write a story about your friends

Watch a performance poets on YouTube

Read instead of watching for a week

Read first thing in the morning for a week

Don't say no to your younger sibling's request of read-aloud stories all week

Read a book featuring your favourite sport or activity



Read a spooky story at night time

Do a book swap with a friend

Write a deleted scene for your favourite film or TV series

Read an illustrated book

Write an article about the top five computer games with great storylines

Write a comic based on your favourite computer game or film

Read a comic that isn't about superheroes

Find a book you liked when you were younger and read it again

Read the first page of five different books and read the one you like best

Hold an extreme reading competition

Find a wordless picture book and share it with someone younger than you

Spend 15 minutes every day for a week

Read a comic book then have a go at writing your own comic strip featuring the same characters

Read a newspaper article

## **Dares suitable for a whole group**

Email a list of your class' favourite books in to the [First Minister's Reading Challenge](#)

Ask some of your teachers to bring in photos of their bookshelves and make a quiz

Find a poem that makes you laugh

Visit the library and ask for a recommendation

Guerilla poetry - hide poems/quotes around your school for people to find

Decorate your classroom door as a book cover

Organise a reading flashmob in your school

Watch one of Scottish Book Trust's Authors Live events.

Read a book which was made into a film

Stand up in assembly and share a book recommendation

Read a comic/graphic novel

Write a story about your friends

Watch a performance poets on YouTube

Read instead of watching TV during for a week

Read first thing in the morning during for a week

Recommend a book to a relative of another generation

Volunteer to read out a page from your book to the rest of the class

Volunteer to tidy your class or school library

Put a sign on your desk saying what you're reading right now

Have a book group at school and share your favourites

Recommend a book to a family member

Do a book swap with a friend

Read an illustrated book

Do a YouTube/social media book review

Read a comic that isn't about superheroes

Read the first page of five different books and read the one you like best

Hold an extreme reading competition

Hold a lucky book dip

Borrow a book for one of your friends

Run a book of the month scheme in your class

Spend 15 minutes every day reading for a week

Read a comic book then have a go at writing your own comic strip featuring the same characters

Read a newspaper article

Make your own reading den either at home or at school and take a photo of it

Think of a funny book title pun – have a competition in your class!

Email a list of your class' favourite books in to the [First Minister's Reading Challenge](#)

Write your own class book. You could choose a theme and work in groups, taking it in turns to write a chapter based on what the group before wrote

Make a recommendations box for your classroom – you could take it round to other classes too!

## Helpful resources

A lot of the dares will involve pupils looking for books to read or recommend to others. To help with this, they can use our book lists:

<http://scottishbooktrust.com/reading/book-lists>.

Some dares challenge pupils to write a comic. We have a resource to support pupils to write a comic book. We also have a resource to support pupils to write a film scene.

Finally, to help you create a reading culture in school, there are lots of exciting, tried and tested ideas in our creating a reading culture resource.

All these resources are available to download from the learning section of the Scottish Book Trust website.