

READ to the BEAT

Summer Reading Challenge 2026 Newsletter

The Summer Reading Challenge is an annual challenge run jointly by The Reading Agency and public libraries. This year the challenge is Read to the Beat, all about being musical and ties in with the National Year of Reading 2026.

It runs Friday 17th July to Saturday 5th September 2026.



Children are encouraged to read whatever they choose for the challenge, recognising the importance of reading for pleasure in increasing empathy and improving well-being, as well as in children's educational success. The theme this year is all about music! Children will be able to find books linked to their favourite creative arts, and access activities at the library.

The Challenge

- Children must be members of the library service. Join the library [here](#) or go to your local library.
- The challenge invites children to read six library books or more during the summer holidays.
- Children can borrow books or read our e-books, magazines and audiobooks available on our BorrowBox and PressReader app. [More about e-resources](#)
- Families can sign up for the challenge at any library, at any stage in the summer from Friday 17th July.
- Children are awarded a certificate and a medal for reading 6 books.
- Children completing the challenge (6 books) will be entered into a lucky dip at their library for the chance to win a £40 voucher for The Works to buy arts, crafts and books.

Struggle with reading? We can help!



- For dyslexia, we have collections of shorter books, with special fonts and paper – and great stories.
- The BorrowBox app has special accessibility features, which allow customers to select font, background and fontsize.
- Picture books aren't just for toddlers! Libraries have collections of older picture books for young readers.

- Get hooked on graphic novels (comic style books).
- Learning to read? Select from beginning to read or short chapter books
- Booklists with lots of ideas available on our [Virtual Library](#).
- Some children (especially boys) prefer non-fiction. Dinosaurs, transport and space are particularly popular.
- Enjoy stories through audiobooks. Free to borrow on CD or download with [BorrowBox](#).



All libraries will have activities for children available throughout the summer.
All libraries offer a Treasure Hunt to children when they complete the reading challenge