



Lord Lawson of  
Beamish Academy

# Reading Ambassadors: Literacy News

NATIONAL YEAR OF READING 2026

## Find your next great read!

2026 is the National Year of Reading, an entire year dedicated to helping people young and old discover the joy of reading. Whether you love books or haven't found the right one yet, this year is all about exploring new stories, characters and adventures!

## Why do we have a National Year of Reading?

Research shows that in recent years, fewer people have been reading for pleasure. This year aims to help everyone read more often by discovering books they enjoy, and make reading part of everyday life.

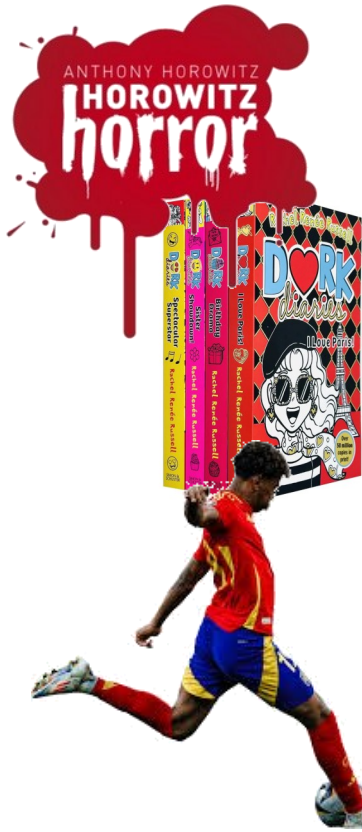
## How can YOU get involved?

- Tell your friends and family about this special year.
- Recommend books you've enjoyed.
- Read for ten minutes each day.
- Try a new author or genre!
- Visit your school or local library.
- Read what you love. Have interests and hobbies? Read about them. It's a great way to get into reading!
- Be fearless! Choose something new and expand your horizons!
- Try to establish a regular reading routine. By doing this, reading will become a natural part of your day. Effortless!



### CONTENTS:

National Year of Reading .....	1
Top Rated Books 2025.....	2
Author in focus.....	2
Book of the month: March.....	3
Celebrating	
World Book Day.....	3
How can parents help?.....	4
Why you need to read.....	5
Library at Lord Lawson.....	6
Activity page .....	7



## TOP RATED CHILDREN'S BOOKS OF 2025

To get you started on your reading journey, here's some of our favourite reads of 2025.

**Humour-** Lottie Brooks by Jacqueline Wilson

Aimed at readers aged 9 to 12 years old, covering issues like starting secondary school, friendship struggles, and first crushes, with Lottie herself often portrayed around 11 or 12, this book is perfect for fans of [Dork Diaries](#) and [Diary of a Wimpy Kid](#) by Jeff Kinney

**Horror** – Horowitz Horror Series by Anthony Horowitz

Enter the dark and scary world of Anthony Horowitz and expect the unexpected! It's a world where everything seems nice and normal to begin with. But the weird, the surprising and the truly terrifying are always lurking just out of sight.



Horowitz Horror books are a must read!

**Mystery** – Dread Wood by Jennifer Killick

As the fear and dread build up in this tense thriller, a group of misfits is forced to work as a team to defeat the most terrifying of hidden attackers. Creepy things lurk in the shadows, indescribable nasties leap out of the ground when least expected and death, or worse, awaits anyone who dares to put an end to some really dreadful events!

**Sports Fiction-** Football Superstars Series

From [Lionel Messi](#) and [Cristiano Ronaldo](#) to [Bukayo Saka](#) and [Sadio Mane](#), each of the Football superstars books zooms in on the story, life and major success moments of one of the many footballers who have made history. *Which one will be your ultimate hero?*



## AUTHOR IN FOCUS

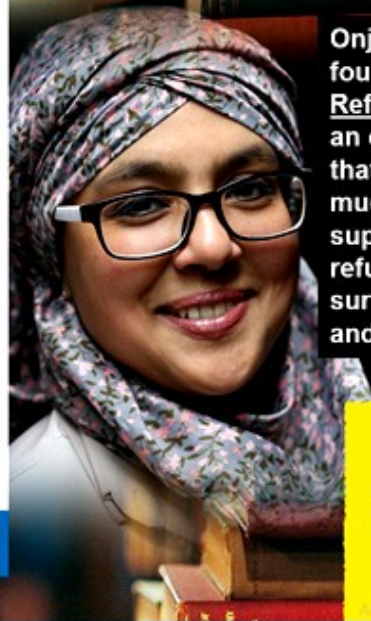
*"SOMETIMES I THINK EVERYONE LIKES TO BELIEVE A LIE EVEN WHEN THEY KNOW IT'S A LIE BECAUSE IT'S MORE EXCITING THAN THE TRUTH."* - ONJALI Q. RAUF

## Onjali Q. Rauf



Onjali Q. Rauf is an award winning and best-selling children's author and activist. Her books are especially noteworthy helping children understand and deal with a range of issues in a narrative that they can relate to in an engaging way.

Onjali is also the founder of [O's Refugee Aid Team](#), an organisation that provides much needed support for refugee families surviving in Calais and Dunkirk.



RESPECT • TRUST • COURAGE • AMBITION

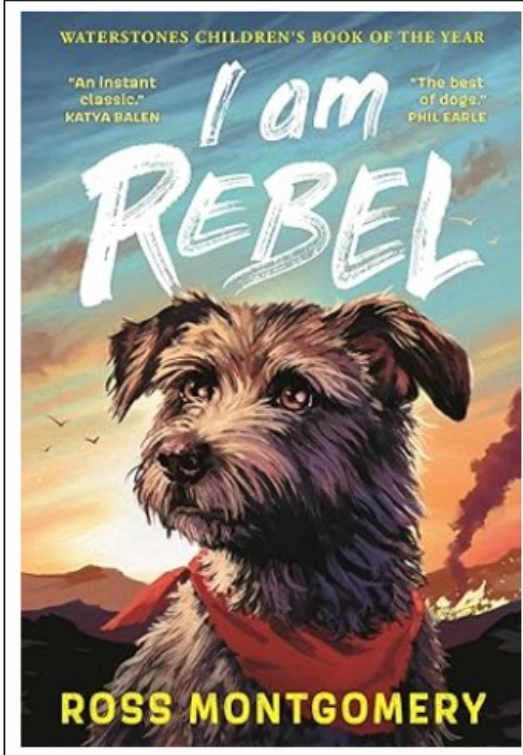
WORLD BOOK DAY

# Book of the Month

2026  
NATIONAL YEAR  
OF READING



## March



Rebel is a very good dog. Every day is perfect for him. He wakes up with his boy, Tom, spends the day helping on the farm, and curls up on Tom's bed at night. Sometimes he even gets a lamb bone for dinner! What more could a dog want?

But everything changes when 12-year-old Tom joins the rebel army. Rebel doesn't understand why Tom has gone, but he knows one thing for sure: **he has to find him**. Rebel sets off on a brave journey across mountains and villages to rescue his boy before the King's army reaches him.

This story is heart-warming and exciting. It's sad in some moments but in a good way, and **no dogs get hurt**, so animal lovers can relax. The book is told in Rebel's own voice, which makes it fun to read — sometimes you know more than he does, but the twists will still surprise you.

With short, action-packed chapters, this is a great choice for class reading or bedtime. Rebel truly is a *very good boy*.

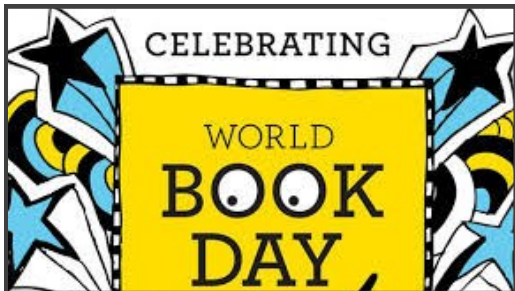
Available to borrow from the Academy Library

Trust

Respect

Courage

Ambition



**We love to celebrate reading and World Book Day gives us a fantastic reason to celebrate in STYLE! World Book Day 2026 was no exception!**

This year, our World Book Day celebrations were bigger and brighter than ever! Students and staff embraced the joy of reading through a range of creative and engaging activities. Throughout the week leading up to the main event, the whole school took part in Drop Everything and Read, creating a wonderful moment of quiet focus and shared enjoyment of books.

Staff joined in the fun with their brilliant 'shelfies', giving students a peek at the books that inspire them.

Our Sixth Form students added extra excitement by dressing up as their favourite literary characters, bringing stories to life around the school.

Years 7 and 8 enjoyed a lively World Book Day quiz, while our Reading Café offered a cosy space for students to relax with a book and a refreshing drink. Creativity was flowing in our "Design Your Own Book Cover" competition, and many students also took part in a special mindful colouring activity creating some beautiful bookmarks.

Activities ran throughout the week and truly celebrated the power of reading and imagination. Thank you to all students and staff who helped make it such a success.

# How can parents help?

## The Importance of Book Choice in Supporting Children's Reading

At school, we work hard to nurture children's enjoyment of reading, and one of the most effective ways to do this is by giving them opportunities to choose their own books. Research shows that when children feel their reading preferences are valued, they are more motivated to read and more likely to develop positive reading habits.

Here's how book choice supports young readers:

1. It encourages independence: Allowing children to select their own reading material gives them a sense of ownership. This independence helps them read because they want to, which is key to building long-term motivation.
2. It connects reading to their interests: Children are naturally more engaged when they read about topics that reflect their hobbies, curiosities, and personal experiences. When they can choose books that resonate with them, reading becomes more enjoyable and meaningful.
3. It builds confidence: Children tend to choose books they feel comfortable with. When reading feels accessible and enjoyable, they experience more success, which strengthens their confidence and reinforces the belief that they are capable readers.
4. It helps shape their identity as readers: Each book a child chooses helps them understand their own tastes and preferences. Over time, these choices contribute to a stronger sense of themselves as readers—something that encourages them to read more often and with greater enthusiasm.

By supporting children in choosing their own books—both at school and at home, we help them develop confidence, independence, and a lifelong love of reading. A small amount of choice can make a big difference in their reading journey.

## THE NEED TO READ

*“Whether you love books or haven’t found the right one yet, this year is all about exploring new stories, characters, and adventures!”*

# So... Why Should You READ?

IT’S A QUESTION THAT’S ASKED SO OFTEN, AND HERE’S THE TRUTH BEHIND THE NEED TO READ....

### READING CAN CHILL YOU OUT

Research shows that reading is *the* most effective stress-buster - even better than listening to music, exercising, or enjoying a cup of tea. Grab a book, relax, and let your mind unwind.

### READING KEEPS YOUR BRAIN SHARP

A lifetime of reading helps maintain mental agility, especially as you get older. Reading strengthens memory, supports comprehension, and keeps your mind active even when your body might not be.

### READING CAN HELP YOU SLEEP BETTER

Screens before bedtime signal your brain to *wake up*. Switching off your phone or tablet and reading a book instead helps your mind wind down, making it easier to fall asleep.

### READING MAKES YOU MORE EMPATHETIC

Getting emotionally absorbed in a story can boost empathy. When you connect with characters, you become better at understanding real-life emotions and perspectives.

### READING EXPANDS YOUR VOCABULARY AND IMPROVES WRITING

Books expose you to new words, ideas, and styles. Over time, you naturally absorb grammar and writing techniques from great authors, helping you express yourself clearly and confidently - especially helpful for school and exams!

### READING CAN CHANGE THE WORLD

Fiction fuels creativity. Creative thinkers solve problems, imagine new possibilities, and drive artistic, scientific, and cultural breakthroughs. Your next book might spark your next great idea.

### READING BUILDS ANALYTICAL THINKING

Regular reading boosts intelligence and general knowledge. It encourages deeper thinking, helps you make connections, and strengthens your ability to understand and evaluate information.

# Library at Lord Lawson

The Library at Lord Lawson of Beamish Academy is a vibrant and inclusive learning hub located on the top floor of the school. It provides a calm, structured environment where students across all year groups can engage in independent study, complete homework, and develop essential literacy skills. The library plays a pivotal role in supporting academic achievement, personal growth, and student leadership.

Literacy lessons are delivered in the library, offering students the opportunity to explore a diverse range of contemporary and classic literature. These sessions enhance reading fluency, comprehension, and foster a lifelong love of reading. Students are actively encouraged to browse and borrow books for both pleasure and research purposes.

Our collection is regularly updated to reflect curriculum priorities and student interests. Special events such as author visits and celebrations like World Book Day bring literature to life, enriching the curriculum and inspiring students to read widely and with enthusiasm.

## **Personal Development and Wellbeing**

The Library hosts a dedicated Mindfulness and Wellbeing Group, offering structured activities that promote emotional resilience, self-awareness, and mental health. This calm and supportive space encourages students to reflect, recharge, and build positive coping strategies.

## **Lunchtime Library Enrichment Activities**

Our Library Enrichment Programme includes a wide variety of engaging activities such as spelling bees, book swaps, book clubs and events led by our Reading Ambassadors.

These sessions promote creativity, collaboration, and a deeper engagement with literacy. Students also have access to age-appropriate newspapers and magazines, supporting media literacy and critical thinking.

Book clubs provide a social space for students to discuss literature, express ideas through art and writing, and share their passion for reading.

## **Student Leadership Opportunities**

We offer two key leadership initiatives through the Library:

- **Student Librarian Programme (for students in years 7 – 9)**  
Students develop leadership and organisational skills by assisting with library management, curating displays, and supporting peers in book selection.
- **Reading Ambassadors Programme (All Year Groups):**  
Our Reading Ambassadors lead literacy initiatives, design promotional materials, and contribute to our reading and literacy bulletins. This programme nurtures teamwork, creativity, and a strong reading culture across the Academy.

## **Opening hours and access**

In addition to lunchtime activities, the Library is open after school for students who wish to study, complete homework, or enjoy quiet reading time.

# ACTIVITY PAGE

## COLOUR ME IN BOOKMARK

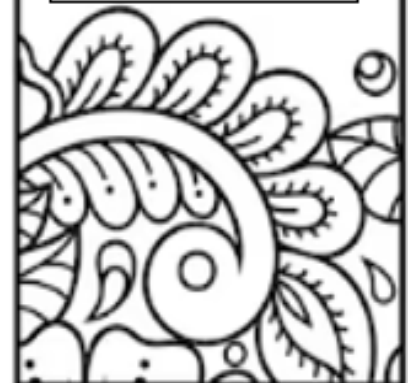
### Word search

Y	H	P	A	R	G	O	I	B	P	L	O	T	L
W	O	N	D	E	R	G	E	N	R	E	N	E	B
C	H	A	R	A	C	T	E	R	S	A	V	B	U
R	N	E	W	S	P	A	P	E	R	O	R	P	L
O	E	C	F	I	C	T	I	O	N	U	A	O	C
A	R	V	H	P	M	E	G	C	L	T	O	E	T
L	I	M	O	O	C	P	I	B	R	E	H	L	S
D	E	B	A	C	C	H	Y	I	O	O	Y	T	O
D	F	C	D	G	P	O	C	K	R	I	S	I	H
A	H	W	N	A	A	K	L	R	I	F	A	T	G
H	O	O	R	E	N	Z	O	A	C	D	T	R	D
L	T	G	L	E	I	R	I	S	T	A	N	E	A
H	A	P	S	E	R	C	I	N	E	E	A	A	S
D	A	S	E	G	S	O	S	K	E	P	F	D	R

- MAGAZINE
- PATRICK NESS
- TITLE
- PLOT
- BIOGRAPHY
- GRAPHIC NOVEL
- CHOCOLATE
- ROALD DAHL
- SAD GHOST CLUB
- WONDER
- WIMPY KID
- SCIENCE
- CHARACTERS
- HOLES
- NEWSPAPER
- COVER
- HORROR
- FANTASY
- FICTION
- READ
- GENRE
- BLURB



*Just  
one  
more  
chapter*

# Riddles

Can you work out which books these riddles are describing?

### RIDDLE 1:

Fall down the hole of an old oak tree,  
You'll be greeted with words eat and drink me.  
Time is running and tea is farce,  
Next onto croquet with the queen of hearts.



### RIDDLE 2:

Over the hills and through the dell,  
Little folk who wander well  
Journey to a mountain  
where a dragon doth dwell.



Not All Those Who Wander Are Lost