

# Schoolreaders

improving literacy • increasing life chances

## A message from our Founder and CEO, Jane Whitbread



It's a pleasure to be writing this in Spring 2021 with children now back in school. I'd like to begin by thanking you all for your patience and contributions over this past difficult, pandemic year. In particular, thank you to our wonderful volunteers who had to pause their in-school volunteering and who are eager to return to their schools when it is safe and practicable.

Thankfully, we were able to adapt our in-school volunteering reading support provision quickly during school closures and continued reaching thousands of children with reading support through both digital volunteering and our hugely popular Schoolreaders Storytime programme. Our 1,500 partner primary schools received 3 recorded video stories every week which they used both in-school and sent to parents for their children at home. We have been inundated with messages of thanks for these.

The fall-out of lost education due to school closures over the past year is now being assessed and the findings make stark reading. The children most affected by lost reading skills are the 5/6 year olds, but the same study found that they can catch up quickly with the right support. Even more concerning is the recent Government suggestion that one in three children will be transitioning from primary to secondary school this year not being able to read properly. The children that have been most affected are those who were already disadvantaged.

The need for Schoolreaders support has never been greater. Our aim over the past seven years has been to give all primary school children the opportunity to read well so that they can then fully access their secondary education and make the most of life's opportunities. Even pre-pandemic one in four children was leaving primary school not reading properly. Our volunteers are in great demand - over 10% of the primary schools in England have registered with us asking for our volunteers and more join every week.

continued overleaf

### Our amazing volunteers rise to the challenges brought by months of school closures

“It is a joy to get up in the morning and be able to listen to the children. I love it, the kids love it and the class teacher loves it.”

- A Derbyshire Schoolreader



### Catch-up time in the classroom

“I never really liked reading because it was too difficult... but you make it fun and I can't wait for tomorrow!”

- A pupil's vote of confidence in their Schoolreader



### A Head Teacher welcomes back her volunteers

“Now that the children are back in school, apart from rebuilding their emotional wellbeing, our priority is reading. Literacy links directly to children's educational attainment and this is where Schoolreaders volunteers, who are themselves passionate about books, come into their own!”

- Andrea Ward, Head Teacher, Renhold VC Primacy School

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Further news is that we have developed an online volunteer training portal and have had a huge surge in new volunteer applications. We now have a 'small army' of volunteers able to help children's reading in a local school. We hope to be supporting 20,000 children with weekly one-to-one support by the end of the year. Our proven model is simple and scaleable.

In order to meet this enormous need we also need to raise the funding to recruit, select, interview and match new volunteers to a school. With the increase in need and numbers this is a challenge. We have recently launched our Race for Reading campaign to help with this and we are also hoping for support through gifts in wills. We are extremely grateful to those of you reading this who are financial supporters.

We are very well positioned to help thousands of children to catch up on lost reading skills so that the negative effects of the pandemic on education won't have a lifelong impact. Your support is crucial to this.

**Thank you so much**


*Jane Wabneed*

## 2020 IMPACT REPORT

Our recently-published Impact Report summarises our activity and effectiveness during a year of unprecedented challenges. Find out some of the facts and figures by visiting

[www.schoolreaders.org/impact-report-2020](http://www.schoolreaders.org/impact-report-2020)



generously sponsored by  TRITAX BIG BOX

If you're feeling full of beans post-lockdown (or if you're not) why not set yourself a positive challenge? You could help improve children's reading while you run, cycle, or even walk your dog. We're hoping that during the 80 days of the event we'll

jointly travel the distance around the world - have a go and be part of reaching this 25,000-mile target!



Writer and explorer Levison Wood is supporting the campaign. He walked the entire length of the Nile and he may be fitter than most, but like all of us he wants to do his bit to champion better literacy.

[www.raceforreading.org](http://www.raceforreading.org)

## Congratulations!

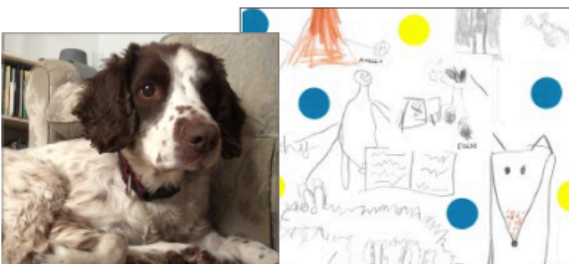


Well done Esther (aged 10) for winning our Summertime Book Review Competition. Esther is pictured here with the books she won for writing a brilliant book review.

## Storytime!

One of our first initiatives when the Covid crisis struck was the launch of the 'Storytime' video library.

Soon after launch, we were contacted by Masterclass, the in-house charity of the Theatre Royal Haymarket in London. The Covid crisis had left many of their young actors and writers at a loose end. These talented young people made ideal Storytime readers and ten young actors made wonderful films for us. As Clare Annamalai, Programme Director of Masterclass, said: 'Young theatre-makers really know how to bring a story to life, and we are so pleased that through this brilliant partnership with Schoolreaders, Masterclass members can use their skills to help children read and enjoy books during the lockdown.'



One more consequence of Storytime has been the catapulting to fame of a canine volunteer. Nelson, pictured here, often joins owner Kathy Thompson when she films herself reading for Storytime. He usually listens attentively but is sometimes overwhelmed by spaniel exuberance and adds his own special sound effects. The children love him and have even been sending him fan mail!





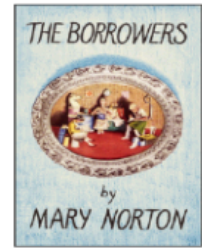
## INTERVIEW with Ellen Krajewski Chair of Judges for the 2021 Carnegie Medal

We find out what it's like to lead the expert panel that awards the most prestigious children's literary prize of the year.

The CILIP Carnegie Medal and its sister award, the Kate Greenaway Medal, are the UK's oldest and best-loved children's book awards. While the Greenaway Medal recognises excellence in illustration, the Carnegie Medal rewards the finest writing and each year honours the children's book that gives 'the most outstanding reading experience'. Receiving the award is often the crowning achievement of a writer's career and, as one would expect, deciding on a winner is a painstaking and sometimes difficult process. Ellen Krajewski, a former school librarian, is Chairing this year's judging panel for organising body CILIP, the Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals.

The awards are unique in being judged solely by librarians, reflecting the origins of the prize as a memorial to Andrew Carnegie (1835-1919) the Scottish-American industrialist and philanthropist, whose grants funded more than 3,500 public libraries in the USA and UK. Ellen's judging panel is made up of librarians from the 12 UK library regions, plus 2 others co-opted to the panel to ensure its diversity. The group reads and assesses against detailed criteria, all books nominated for the 2 medals - 152 this year. During lockdown, panel meetings have taken place on Zoom rather than at CILIP HQ in Bloomsbury, as the longlist is whittled down to a shortlist, with a single winner due to be announced in June. Without giving away any secrets, Ellen says that despite the challenges of this year's remote judging, achieving a consensus has been a smooth process, although she says that this is not always the case!

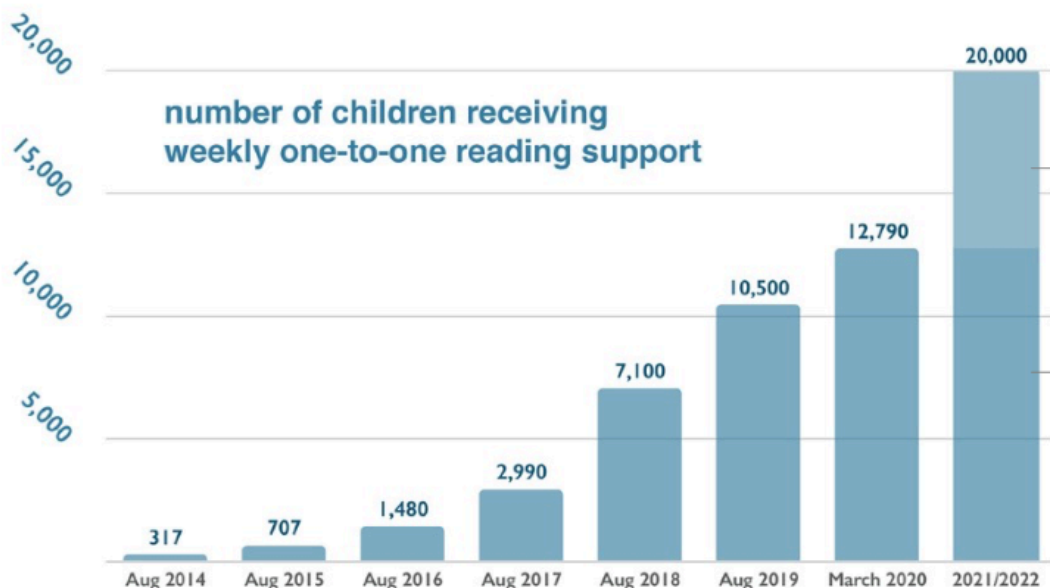
Children and young people have their say via a shadowing process which sees groups in schools and local libraries all over the country reading the shortlist and voting for their own winner. Asked about her own childhood reading, Ellen confirms the central role that school libraries and their heroic librarians play in guiding children towards books. When she was 6, an end-of-afternoon reading of Laura Ingalls Wilder's 'Little House on the Prairie' ignited a lifelong love of books which has today placed her at the head of a judging panel with one of the most eagerly-anticipated decisions of the literary year in its hands.



### Remember these?

The list of Carnegie winners is a roll-call of the finest children's authors of the last 85 years - starting with Arthur Ransome who won the first Medal in 1936 with 'Pigeon Post'.

## SCHOOLREADERS Reaching thousands more children with vital reading support



With the help of all our new volunteers we have the capacity to support 20,000 children each week

In March 2020, when schools closed and our sessions were put on hold, we were helping 12,790 children across 686 schools each week

## SCHOOLREADERS book club quiz



April  
to  
August  
2021

Looking for a great way to have fun with friends, family, or members of your book club, or wanting to enjoy a challenge on your own? Take part in our 4th annual book-themed quiz. There's something for everyone, with questions ranging from the basic to the baffling, and you could win great prizes of Prosecco and signed books. Visit our website to find out more.

## Fundraising heroes

Two of our latest fundraisers are putting their stamina to the test for Schoolreaders.

On May 31st, Tony Wildman, President of Bedford Castle Rotary Club, will cover a route criss-crossing Bedford town centre's several bridges 100 times in the course of a day. David Griffiths, a Suffolk-based head-teacher, has set himself the challenge of running five kilometres each day for a whole year. He is due to end his challenge in September. Thank you so much to Tony and David for their heroic efforts. To find out how they are doing or support them, go to [www.schoolreaders.org](http://www.schoolreaders.org)



above: Tony's walk will take in Bedford's butterfly bridge



right: David dressed for his Christmas-day run

## Our grateful thanks to:

**The UK Government** for funding from the Coronavirus Community Support Fund, distributed by The National Lottery Community Fund, which has helped us to continue recruiting and supporting volunteers.



HM Government

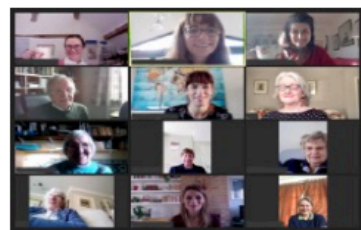
In partnership with

**THE NATIONAL LOTTERY  
COMMUNITY FUND**

**People's Postcode Trust** for a major grant to cover some of our core costs. At a time when there is greater demand than ever for our services, this generous funding is very gratefully received.

## Keeping in touch during lockdown Virtual coffee mornings

A big thank you to the many volunteers and supporters who joined us during lockdown at one of our virtual get-togethers. These are still taking place and, thanks to our volunteer County Ambassadors, every single Schoolreaders volunteer will have been invited to join us before they are over. Despite initial trepidation, Zoom turns out to work admirably as a meeting venue, and the coffee mornings are proving a wonderful way to keep in touch and draw strength - and a lot of laughter - from each others' experiences and reminiscences.



Tea, cake and laughter at a virtual gathering with volunteers in Oxfordshire

## Some time to spare?

Do you know which languages these commonly-used English words are borrowed from?

ANORAK

- a) Nepali
- b) Indonesian
- c) Finnish
- d) Greenlandic

YO-YO

- a) Bengali
- b) Tagalog (Philippines)
- c) Japanese
- d) Swahili

TOMATO

- a) Japanese
- b) Nahuatl (Mexico)
- c) Quechua (Peru)
- d) Urdu

HOI POLLOI

- a) Fijian
- b) Greek
- c) Russian
- d) Swedish

SHAMPOO

- a) Arabic
- b) French
- c) Hindi
- d) Malagasy (Madagascar)

MOSQUITO

- a) Malayalam (Kerala)
- b) Maya (Mexico)
- c) Spanish
- d) Yoruba (Nigeria)

© The Language Lover's Puzzle Book by Alex Bellos  
published by The Guardian and Faber&Faber, Nov 2020

## and finally...

**SUNDOWN  
CINEMA**

We're excited to announce a new partnership with Sundown Cinemas and thank the company for its support. Look out for more news soon...

**Schoolreaders is a charity and has to raise funds to cover all the costs of recruiting and placing volunteers in schools across the country. Children need your support now more than ever.**

Donations of any size will make a difference. And if you might consider leaving a gift in your Will please visit [www.schoolreaders.org](http://www.schoolreaders.org) or contact Fiona on 01234 924333. Please also feel free to share our details and spread the word with anyone who might like to support this vital work.

Puzzle answers: ANORAK - Greenlandic, YO-YO - Tagalog, TOMATO - Nahuatl, HOI POLLOI - Greek, SHAMPOO - Hindi, MOSQUITO - Spanish



### A message from our Fundraising Director

The past months have been challenging for so many. So we are more grateful than ever to each of you for continuing to support Schoolreaders, whether through trust and foundation grants, personal gifts, In Memoriam donations, joining in our fundraising campaigns, company involvement, or using your own ideas to generate vital funds. Your contributions, no matter what size, have helped bring reading support to even more children, and to double the number of Schoolreaders volunteers in schools that are desperate for extra reading support for their pupils. Thank you for your part in helping change those children's lives!

Alice Garnett



We're inviting everyone to join us as we walk, run, swim - even hop - to support children's reading. Our Race for Reading event lasts 80 days and we're aiming to cover enough miles to circle the globe - do join us!

generously sponsored by TRITAX BIG BOX

Are you a super-speedy cyclist or more of an ambling dog-walker? We don't mind; there's room for you on our team! The idea is simple - get as many miles under your belt as possible. You can walk, jog, cycle, or skip; it doesn't matter as long as you are moving. Clock your miles and get friends and family to sponsor your efforts. The event runs for 80 days, closing on 19th June, and we're hoping that between us we'll cover the distance round the world - that's 25,000 miles. There's lots of information on how to get going at [www.raceforreading.org](http://www.raceforreading.org) and if you're ready to start, that's the place to sign up. So why not stretch your legs and get moving to help improve children's literacy?



Explorer and writer  
Levison Wood is  
championing the Race  
for Reading campaign

“ I believe that education is crucial to the nation's wellbeing and future, and ought to be of the utmost priority, especially now after the devastating effects of Covid lockdowns. ”

visit [www.raceforreading.org](http://www.raceforreading.org) to sign up

Donations can be made via [www.schoolreaders.org](http://www.schoolreaders.org) or on the form overleaf

### A gift to the next generation: Reading skills to last a lifetime

Could you consider making a gift to us in your Will? We've just produced a leaflet which shows you how simple this process can be. Or you could choose to make a donation in memory of a loved one. As the daughter of a long-standing friend of Schoolreaders recently told us:

“ Mum was an avid supporter of Schoolreaders...we know she would have been delighted to give this donation. ”

### Your help is invaluable!

We are so grateful for any support. Have you considered these simple ways to give?

To donate when you shop, without paying a penny more for your purchases go to:



smile [amazon.co.uk](https://www.amazon.co.uk)

To donate as you de-clutter go to:



Or if you are able to please consider making a regular gift. Just £1 a month could support a child's reading for a whole year (including Gift Aid) or £1.25 a month without Gift Aid. Please find a donation form overleaf.

**Schoolreaders is a charity and has to raise funds to cover all the costs of recruiting and placing volunteers in schools across the country. Children need your support now more than ever.**

Donations of any size will make a difference. And if you might consider leaving a gift in your Will please visit [www.schoolreaders.org](http://www.schoolreaders.org) or contact Fiona on 01234 924333. Please also feel free to share our details and spread the word with anyone who might like to support this vital work.

**Your details:**

Title \_\_\_\_\_ First name \_\_\_\_\_ Surname \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Postcode \_\_\_\_\_

**For just £15 you can sponsor one child's weekly reading support for a whole year. A regular gift of £5 per month will support 4 children for a year, and £25 per month will support 20 children for a year.**

**I would like to make a regular donation of £ \_\_\_\_\_ monthly/quarterly/annually**  
(please delete as appropriate)

Starting on dd/mm/yy \_\_\_\_\_ (please choose a start date at least one month from now)

To the Manager of (please complete your bank details):

Bank name \_\_\_\_\_ Bank address \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Sort code \_\_\_\_\_

Account number \_\_\_\_\_ Account name \_\_\_\_\_

**Our bank details:** Please pay to Barclays Bank plc, Sort code 20 47 47,  
 Account number 90166774, Account name: Schoolreaders

**I would like to make a single donation of £ \_\_\_\_\_**

☐ I enclose a cheque/charity voucher made payable to **Schoolreaders**
☐ I've paid the money into the following bank/Post Office \_\_\_\_\_ on \_\_\_\_\_ dd/mm/yy

☐ I've used online banking, reference \_\_\_\_\_ on \_\_\_\_\_ dd/mm/yy  
(if possible, please use your surname in the reference)

This money was raised in the following way \_\_\_\_\_ (where applicable)

## Through Gift Aid, any donation you make will be worth 25% more

Please be sure to tick the declaration box immediately below and to add today's date.


☐ I would like Schoolreaders to treat the above donation(s) and any donations I make in the future and have made in the past 4 years as Gift Aid donations until I notify you otherwise. Date \_\_\_\_\_ dd/mm/yy

I am a UK taxpayer and understand that if I pay less Income Tax and/or Capital Gains Tax than the amount of Gift Aid claimed on all my donations in that tax year it is my responsibility to pay any difference. Please remember to let us know if you want to cancel this declaration, change your name or home address or no longer pay sufficient tax on your income and/or capital gains.

## We'd love to keep you updated on how your donation is changing children's lives

We may contact you by post to tell you more about our work and other ways you can help, including opportunities to donate, volunteer or fundraise.

I am happy to hear from you by email or phone. My details are: Email \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_ I am happy to hear from you by text ☐I would rather not hear from you by post ☐ I would like to hear about leaving a gift in my will ☐

If you are an existing supporter and haven't completed this section we will continue to contact you as we have in the past. If you change your mind about hearing from us you can contact us on office@schooreaders.org.

To find out how we protect your data please read our Privacy Policy, which is available on our website.