



December 2021

Dear all,

It has been wonderful to hear how successful your team Christmas coffee mornings have been and each area having a wonderful turnout, we hope you all enjoyed getting together before the end of year break.

The past couple of years have been challenging for so many so we are more grateful than ever to each of you for continuing to support ABC to read, whether through trust and foundation grants, personal gifts, in memoriam donations, your contributions no matter what size have helped bring reading support to even more children. Thank you for your part in helping change those children's lives.

If you would like to make a regular donation, to help us recruit and train more volunteers, you can do so via the localgiving website: <https://localgiving.org/charity/abctoread/>. You can also make one-off donations via this website. If you might consider leaving a gift to ABC in your will please do ask us about this.

The Co-op Local Community Fund supports projects across the UK that our members care about. Every time our members buy selected Co-op branded products and services, they give local causes a helping hand.

If you have a Co-op membership card, simply select ABC to read as your preferred cause on your profile. Then, when you shop at Co-op and present your membership card, not only will you get points to receive money off coupons, but it also means Co-op will donate to ABC to read too.

To find out more about getting a free Co-op membership card, or how to choose us as your preferred cause go to: <https://membership.coop.co.uk/causes/56437> For those of you that shop in Asda (Tilehurst branch), please do put your little green token into the token drop for us to have a chance of winning £500.

BOOK EXCHANGE DATES

WINDSOR - 25th January

10-11.30am

Redwood House, 9 Queen Annes Road, Windsor SL4 2BJ

READING - 27th January

10.30 - 11.30am

St. Marks Church Hall, 94 Cranbury Road, Reading RG30 2TA

WEST BERKS. - 26th January

10.00 - 11.30am

4, The Oaks, Tadley, Berkshire RG26 4XX

WOKINGHAM - 24th January

12.15pm - 2.15pm

Jennett's Park Community Centre, Tawny Owl Square, Bracknell RG12 8EB

Welcome to our new volunteers

We would like to extend a warm welcome to those new volunteers who have recently joined us. We hope you are enjoying your time helping the children in your new school!

Lisa Edwards, Rose Somerset, Suzanne Kelly, Valerie Dunk, Rita Wood, Gemma Eastabrook-Bonet, Lesley Winch, Denise Rolfe, Siobhan McLoughlin, Alison Williams, Gillian Price, Pauline Humphreys, Keith Richards, Alexandra Jalali, Rebecca Samuel, Lucy De Foubert, Nancy Heighway, Francesca Unsworth, Ruth Wilson, Michael Andrews, Sally Harrop, Alison Haymonds, Lesley Eddolls, Teresa Dale, Hilary Crofton, Teresa Southby, Amanda Buchan, Michael De Malpas-Finlay, Regina MacDonald, Barbara Bellman, Sue Thomson, Joanna Josey, Denise De Groot, Liz Scarborough, Hazel Emery, Maggie Briggs, Jane Taylor, Alison Wattiau, Sonia Clark, Gillian Whiteford, Sarah Hamilton, Katie Caird, Judith Lane, Joanna Booyesen, Carol Harris, Jacqueline Watkins, Carolyn Hill, Anne Huddart, Manisha Sharma, Liz Unsworth, Rosalind Lockwood-Davies, Christine Pocock, Zoe Grainge



Ideas for your reading sessions

We always welcome suggestions of activities to use in sessions and here are a couple of ideas which have been used over the years, in various adapted ways:

'Getting to know you' mini book

All about me

This is a picture of me

I am _____ years old

These are the people in my family:

My name:

When I am not at school I like to:

In our family we like to:

A sheet of A4 paper folded in half makes a mini book of four pages. Meeting a new reader and asking some 'Getting to know you' questions, write some simple sentences on page 1, e.g., "Mary is six. She is in Tulip class. She likes pizza. She has a brother. He is ten. His name is Peter" Asking the child to read them back will be helpful in estimating their level and will help their confidence, as they will recognise/remember some content. At session two, ask them to read "Their Book" again and add more of their answers to questions, on page 2, to be re-read in session three.

Even a very young reader will probably recognise their own name and their class, but this can also work with older children, using more complex sentences. Depending on individual responses, these "books" can be added to and/or illustrated by the child and even continued subsequent sheets. Summarising what happened in a previous session, for instance ("We read The Gruffalo and played I-spy") can be useful in starting a session.

Using a story bag

Make a collection of small figures (plenty in charity shops) and put a selection into a cotton bag, preferably with a drawstring to hide the contents. The figures can be in sets (zoo animals, cars, monsters or selected for a story mix: a pirate, a dolphin, a boat, a police car). Some ways to use them:

- Bringing them out one by one, ask the child to name them.
- Write the name of each object as it appears, put them all back, then bring them out again and ask the child to tick off each name on the list as it comes out. (This has become very popular with a very reluctant 6-year-old reader.)
- Asking how many things they can remember after they have gone back into the bag; older children can write their own list.
- Use the bag to tell a story, each item coming out as a surprise, either pre-selected like the pirate and the police car, or completely random. Ask the child to tell the story, or do it yourself, or take it in turns. Stories can be written down or embellished in various ways.

It's important that what is in the bag can't be seen.

The bag could be brought to about one session in four, varying the objects each time, and the activity.



Can you leave a review for us please?

In order for us to increase our search engine optimisation, which could enable more volunteers and schools to apply to ABC to read and raise our profile further, it would be really helpful if we had some google reviews. These can be created by volunteers showing what they enjoy about volunteering for ABC to read and the feedback they receive from the children and teachers showing the impact of their work. ABC to read (Assisting Berkshire Children) would love your feedback. Post a review to our profile: https://g.page/r/CWo1_DOctXqQEB0/review



Our East Berkshire volunteers at Café by the Lake, Thames Hospice, Maidenhead



Thames Hospice receiving a donation from our East Berkshire volunteers after their Christmas coffee morning



Our West Berkshire volunteers meeting for a pre-Christmas coffee morning

Share your feedback

It is so important to us that our services reflect the needs of the children and schools we support, as well as the volunteers we work with. Your insights, opinions and ideas help us ensure we are providing the best services possible, so that we can fulfil our vision. Please don't hesitate to contact us with any thoughts or feedback. We will be running our volunteer survey in 2022 to ensure that we are giving you a positive volunteering opportunity.

We would like to wish you all a peaceful Christmas and look forward to seeing you all again in the New Year. Thank you to each one of you for your ongoing support!

Merry Christmas!



Please note that the office will close for the Christmas break on Thursday 15th December and will re-open on Thursday 6th January

