



Our Voice - Words from Hackney



Around 10,000 copies of a book celebrating work by Hackney's young people will hit the borough next month.

"*Our Voice: Words from Hackney* showcases some of the excellent written and visual work created by Hackney pupils through a number of Words Unite community events, including the Linklaters' Reading and Writing Challenge and the Hackney Poet Laureate competition," says The Learning Trust Chief Executive Alan Wood. "We hope *Our Voice – Words from Hackney* will encourage other children to read, write and draw for fun."

Our Voice
Words from Hackney

The book is a joint project by Linklaters and The Learning Trust and once it is launched at the Words Unite Conference on 1 July; around 9,000 children will receive their own copy.

High-profile figures including Baroness Amos, former Leader of the House of Lords, best-selling crime-writer Ruth Rendell and former T4 presenter June Sarpong will receive copies to help promote it.

Copies will also be used in a 'book crossing' in which the book will travel to international schools through contacts both at Linklaters and The Learning Trust. Copies will also be left in places throughout Hackney, such as cafes, parks and the Hackney Museum, for people to pick up, read and then leave for someone else to find. If you find *Our Voice – Words from Hackney* you can log in to www.bookcrossing.com and trace where it has travelled.



Hackney library donates books to Montserrat

The only remaining public library on the Caribbean island of Montserrat has received books from Hackney Library Services.

At least half the island's population are members of the local library, which services four primary schools by book-mobile and the prison.

Homerton Library Users Group donated children's non-fiction and fiction books from Stoke Newington Library.

"I am very grateful for the generous donation and I hope the links we have developed will be a continuous source of support to the island's public library," says Montserrat national and library user Garvin Johnson, who approached the library services earlier this year.



Hay Festival



The three Hackney pupils with Chris Riddell

Three Hackney pupils rubbed shoulders with the Poet Laureate and top UK writers at the Hay Festival in Hay on Wye, Wales on May 30. The event, opened by Michael Rosen, announced Derek Landy's debut novel, ***Skulduggery Pleasant*** as the winner of the Federation of Children's Book Groups/Red House Children's Book Award.

Chloe Richards (Y6, Harrington Hill), Monisola Olaitan (Y5 Mandeville) and Caitlin Hogan (Y6 William Patten) were joined by Ainsley Dawrent from The Learning Trust and Amardeep Panesar, Year 6 teacher from Harrington Hill at the awards.

The pupils presented a portfolio of entries to author Chris Riddell, who won the KS2 Book Award, during the main ceremony as well as a collection of colourful hats made by Mandeville Y5 children.

"The Federation of Children's Book Groups is keen to run the awards with Hackney primary pupils again next year. They were delighted with the standard of the 4,000 entries in the picture book and KS2 sections and the enthusiasm and support from the 15 schools and two children's centres involved," says Ainsley Dawrent.

Polly Dunbar, author of Penguin, who won the Picture Books prize, sat with the Hackney pupils throughout dinner and answered all their questions.

www.yearofreading.org.uk/WikiREADia is a searchable and editable encyclopaedia. Just like Wikipedia, but all about reading! It has been set up by the National Year of Reading team for people to share good practice in reading for everyone – young children, adults, workplaces or libraries. Anyone is welcome to add information and it's easy to add items and edit them. Check it out!

Eight schools through to debating final

Eight Hackney primary schools have made it to the finals of the borough-wide Debating Challenge, run by global law firm Linklaters on 23 May. Eighteen teams debated 'This House would ban cars from the city centre' and 'This House believes that everybody should be a vegetarian.'

Shacklewell, Millfields, Gayhurst, Our Lady and St Josephs, Betty Layward, Sebright, Mandeville and Kingsmead primary schools will compete in the final debate on 10 July 2008.

"The quality of their arguments shows how well they have prepared in order to put across their views. Coming to an agreement between the judges as to which schools to take through was a really difficult process, as we have seen so much good practice in all the schools," says Chief Adjudicator Debbie Newman.

Quotes from Millfields Community School pupils:

'It was scary but I still enjoyed it' - *Conall Hill*

'I felt proud of my colleagues; it was scary to watch from the audience. It was hard to think up ideas to ask at the end. I could really feel everyone's pressure.' - *Sasha Pelligrini*



*Top: Millfields Community School debaters
Below: Debbie Newman and Shacklewell Primary School debaters*

Carnegie finalist hosts event



To mark the longest running children's book award, The Learning Trust is holding a special Carnegie Finale on 23 June at Hackney's Council Chambers. Seventy students representing ten Hackney secondary schools will judge which book they believe should win the award.

Children's writer Linzi Glass (pictured left), who is short-listed for this year's Carnegie book award, is hosting the event.

"It's always such a surprise to be singled out for something special, especially when it is something as prestigious as the Carnegie shortlist. I was truly thrilled to be included amongst such fine writers and am delighted to be hosting this event," says Linzi Glass.

To prepare for the big event, students have to read the seven short listed books.

"They are gaining experience not only in critiquing books but they also get a chance to speak to others in a formal setting, see how the Carnegie process works and get experience of what it's like to judge a large book award," says The Learning Trust English Consultant Sophie Holdforth.

The Power of Reading

Fourteen Hackney schools are now more knowledgeable about using whole books in literacy lessons.

Thirty two KS2 teachers have been attending 'The Power of Reading' training with CLPE (Centre for Literacy in Primary Education) this academic year. Back in their schools, they have been supported by literacy consultants from The Learning Trust.

"Lessons include many speaking and listening activities that involve and enthuse all pupils and allow time for children to draft and re-draft their writing," says the Trust's Ainsley Dawrent. "Children are enthused by using whole books in lessons, love the activities, create higher quality writing and want to read more books by the authors used in the lessons."



Above: Teachers at Power of Reading session

New Jewish library for boys

"I really like the library. I love the books. I have never been to a library before."

This from a young Jewish boy, who attended the launch of a new library in Hackney. Sixty people attended the official launch of Youth Direct's new library in Manor Road on Friday 23 May.

The organisation received £8,600 funding as part of the Words Unite campaign. This money has gone towards buying new books, in Yiddish, English and Hebrew and installing software for the library.

"It was great to see so many people support the library opening and 60 books were borrowed!" says Youth Direct's James Field. "There are more than 8,000 young people in the Hackney and Haringey Jewish community and many do not access the public libraries due to cultural reasons."

Highlights

- 70% of children at the launch had never been to a library
- 100% would take out books
- An anonymous donor has offered a substantial donation to buy more books

Right: The Learning Trust and Youth Direct at the launch of the library



Poetry day for Travellers



"I want it to sound right, so if anything clangs – let me know," this from author Alan Gibbons during an afternoon with the London Gypsy Travellers Unit earlier this year.

The group (pictured left with Alan) was invited to discuss his latest manuscript for a book about two teenage travellers, one Irish, the other - English. It examines life as a traveller, the ups and downs, school life and dealing with being on the road.

The book, written for teenagers, is set to be launched next spring. Alan plans to distribute the books to schools and spend time visiting them to discuss the book.

AND... Traveller pupils also recently took part in a Words Unite activity at Homerton Library, organised by Hackney Library Service and the Traveller Education Service (TES). The children (Year 6-8) were from Cardinal Pole, Clapton Girls, Kingsmead and Nightingale schools.

Poet Neal Zetter read and performed some of his own poems before providing writing tips and discussing ideas for poems around the theme of St Patrick's Day.

"Each pupil had the opportunity to write their own poem, which they used as the greeting message inside a St Patrick's Day card, designed and illustrated by the children themselves. Most of the children also read their poems to the rest of the group," says Advisory Teacher for Travellers Christine Sanders. "At the end of the day each pupil was presented with a library card and given the opportunity to choose two books to take home and keep; a highlight of the session."

Literacy Garden

Taking the term 'book worms' literally - freelance garden historian Russell Bowes has a new way of linking gardens and literacy. 'The Literary Garden' is a 1.5hr session looking at gardens that feature in works of fiction - both historical and contemporary.

It involves readings from a wide variety of work both famous and not-so-well-known in interactive, entertaining and informative way

Interested? Contact
Russell.Bowes@tube.tfl.gov.uk or check out
www.capabilitybowes.com

Words Unite Conference Tuesday 1 July

HAVE YOU REGISTERED?

Go to
www.learningtrust.co.uk/words_unite/

Before 18 June 2008

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