

# THE POWER OF BOOKS



**World Book Day has teamed up with the National Literacy Trust for a research project into young people's engagement with reading.**

*"We know that teens' commitments, from studying to socialising, playing sports, hobbies and family responsibilities, can put books and reading low down on their To Do list," says Cassie Chadderton, Chief Executive of World Book Day. "So we're inviting teens to join in the discussion, and tell us what would help to get them reading more and how we can support them to make space for reading."*

Later this year, we'll be talking to groups of teenagers to understand some of the key questions and topics that surround reading – and how they feel about it. We'd also love to hear your thoughts on the subject so we're inviting schools to take part in group discussions (online, if necessary) and to share their findings with us at [hi@worldbookday.com](mailto:hi@worldbookday.com).

**Here are some of the findings from research already carried out on this topic:**

- Young people who enjoy reading are three times as likely to read above the level expected for their age compared with those who do not. However, just 50% of 11 to 14 year olds say they enjoy reading.

**"When people go into secondary school reading just kind of plummets, because there's so many more things to worry about, be interested in and focus on."**

- Young people were more than twice as likely to agree with the statement *"There are lots of things I'd prefer to do in my free time than reading"* than the statement *"I don't have time to read"*.
- Research on video game playing and literacy found that young people not only read a variety of materials relating to video games, but 3 in 4 talk to their friends about video games compared with only 3 in 10 who discuss books.

**"It's like you're not cool if you read. And everybody wants to be cool."**

- Surveys have indicated that more than a third of young people agree that *"Reading on screen is cooler than reading a book"*.
- Teachers and librarians have suggested that 'book trailer' videos should be more readily available, to help them to tempt potential readers.
- As parents and teachers are reported to be less likely to encourage reading once children are at secondary age, it may be that influencers begin to take on more of this role for this age group.



## TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

**We've put together some suggested topics for discussion groups in your class, or as part of online learning:**

- Do you make time to read? What persuades you to read for enjoyment when there are other things to do?
- Compared to music, videos, games and online, how do you experience books and reading as part of your personal time?
- Which books are cool? Which books get it right – and which books do you feel get it wrong? Which would you talk with your friends about?
- Have you found a book that seems to be about you and your thoughts and ideas yet? Do you feel more interested in reading if the books reflect your own experience and the world around you?
- Is it important to you that your friends and others you follow or talk with share or talk about reading?

**We'd love to hear how you get on! Share your findings with us at [hi@worldbookday.com](mailto:hi@worldbookday.com). We will add your results to our research.**

