



Finding and Funding Quality Books

It is really challenging to provide enough high-quality tempting texts in response to children's diverse interests, needs and preferences. We need a range of texts types and books which reflect the different realities of children's lives and offer a balance between the 'old and gold' and the 'new and bold'. We also want to ensure children have books at home, as research suggests there is a strong association between book ownership, reading interest and attainment.

Schools use several sources to find and fund new books beyond their own budgets and teachers' generosity. But before you search out new ones, do capitalise on what your **school library service or local library service** has on offer to lend. These are invariably excellent value compared to buying new books, the texts are well-chosen, high quality and in good condition. They are NOT just for topic work, but support children's reading for pleasure. The following ideas, whilst not exclusive, offer additional routes to source income and texts that could tempt and engage readers.



Sourcing external income

1. **Siobhan Dowd Trust:** The Trust offers grants to support young people deprived of access to books. <http://siobhandowdtrust.com/about-the-trust/>
2. **Clore Poetry & Literature Awards:** These Awards fund poetry & literature initiatives for young people under 19. <https://www.cloreduffield.org.uk/poetry-and-literature-awards>
3. **The Foyle Foundation Schools Library Scheme:** This scheme accepts applications from state funded schools in the UK. <http://www.foylefoundation.org.uk/how-to-apply/state-schools.php>
4. **Support your School** is a free fundraising platform, managed by Peters Library Services, which enables schools to raise funds from parents and local businesses. <https://supportyourschool.org.uk/>
5. **Read for Good** is a charity devoted to supporting reading for fun, it offers annual grants in its Brilliant Box of Books programme <https://readforgood.org/>
6. **The Children's Book Project** is a London charity which receives donated books and sorts them for re-distributing to children/ schools. <https://childrensbookproject.co.uk/>
7. **Local companies:** Approach local businesses to sponsor/'adopt' your school, many are supportive when they realise the will influences the skill and they get promotional space.
8. **Church congregations:** Maybe ask for something specific e.g. a set of Award-winning books.
9. **Apply to the PTA:** Focused applications often work best e.g. asking for two sets of the UKLA shortlist.
10. **Appeal to the Governors:** Matched funding helps, so total your resources from e.g. cake sales and charity hauls and ask the governors to match these.

In-school strategies for increasing book stock

1. **Book Swaps:** Regular or occasional, class or school, book swaps involve the children and/or parents/teachers/governors in bringing in books to swap (raffle tickets can be given). Let them go home to be read until the next one or establish a class book box for sharing these.
2. **Leavers' Legacy Books:** Invite Year 6 leavers to gift books to the school library. You could add book gifting name plates and set up a wish list online.
3. **Staff Birthday Assemblies:** Establish public book gifts chosen for each staff member. Later staff can share their views.
4. **Birthday Books:** Parents can be invited to buy a book to give to their child's class as a birthday present, (instead of sweets). Book name plates can be added/designed, and the gift profiled in class/assembly.
5. **Share that Stash Day!** Invite children to bring in old and previously read comics/ magazines to gift. Celebrate their generosity on a Share that Stash Day.
6. **Don't let Sleeping Books lie!** Appeal to your local community to clear out their children's books. Some may be old but gold, others more recent but untouched since their children started secondary school. Bookplates honouring these gifts can help.
7. **Run a Readathon:** If you organise one (the money raised supports books for children in hospitals) you get 20% of whatever you raise in Scholastic book club vouchers.
<https://readforgood.org/>
8. **Fund raising with children:** Run a cake sale, craft fair, netball/football shoot out. But avoid too many reading competitions; RfP is more closely associated with intrinsic motivation.
9. **Book Boxes on the Move!** Using your school /class collections, create book boxes of the most engaging non- fiction, poetry, magazines or comics for moving around each half term, creating 'new' books for each class.
10. **Involve local indie bookshops:** Invite one to set up a stall at a parents' evening or other event. Parents can be invited to purchase books to donate. The school may receive a percentage of sales to spend.
11. **Run a bookfair with a publisher:** Usually you get a percentage back to spend.
12. **Charity shop bargains:** Invite staff to get the best deals for £5 each as a mini competition!
13. **Charity shop deals!** Get to know your local charity shop, they may keep some aside for you at bargain rates- many do!

Where to source new books

If your finance is limited why not start with the previous year's National Award Winners for children and young people. These are summarised on the OU RfP site with all details enabling easy ordering from a supplier. <https://researchrichpedagogies.org/news-awards/details/book-award-winners-2018-19>

You may have a fabulous local independent bookshop, in which case do use them! If not, there are numerous brilliant national organisations that select and sell books, others curate lists on topics and year groups, and/or manage initiatives and resources to support the profession in selecting texts. The range includes the following.

- **Books for Keeps:** This independent children's book magazine reviews hundreds of new children's books each year and publishes articles on every aspect of writing for children.
<http://booksforkeeps.co.uk/>

- **Books for Topics:** Collates booklists to help teachers find and use quality texts in the classroom and on their own reading journeys. With links to buy on Amazon. <https://www.booksfortopics.com/>
- **BookTrust:** Runs national programmes, campaigns and awards, and works with children's centres, schools, libraries and health professionals to reach families who need them most. <https://www.booktrust.org.uk/>
- **Just Imagine Story Centre:** Works with schools to develop reading and writing, where stories and literature are placed at the heart of learning. Sells books/ curated packs too. <https://justimaginestorycentre.co.uk/>
- **Letterbox Library:** Children's bookseller and education supplier, bringing teachers, librarians and parents inclusive children's books. <https://www.letterboxlibrary.com/>
- **Love reading4schools:** A portfolio of book recommendation websites, offering tools, advice and information to help teachers find books. Linked book orders are by Browns Books for Students <https://www.lovereadingschools.co.uk/>
- **Madeleine Lindley:** School library suppliers committed to bringing teachers the best and most up-to-date books for children. <http://www.madeleinelindley.com/>
- **Norfolk Children's Book Centre:** An independent children's book shop (with over 50,000 personally selected books) and school library support service. <https://www.ncbc.co.uk/>
- **Peters Library Services:** Specialist children's library and school book suppliers passionate about inspiring children and young people to read. <https://peters.co.uk/>
- **Reading Road Map:** This initiative, led by Islington Library Service, offers various maps to support children, parents and teachers read and recommend contemporary texts. <https://www.ukreadingroadmap.org/>
- **The Centre for Literacy in Primary Education:** Produces resources to ensure teachers have access to knowledge, research and materials to help them use quality children's literature to raise achievement. <https://clpe.org.uk/>
- **The Reading Agency:** Promotes the benefits of reading among children and adults in the UK, working with partners to deliver programmes, such as the Summer Reading Challenge. <https://readingagency.org.uk/>
- **Research rich pedagogies:** This OU research and practice website, reports all children's Book Award Winners and an annual summary of these and monthly Top Texts chosen by education experts. <https://researchrichpedagogies.org/news-awards/>

