

Reaching readers

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The reader-centred approach

- Now part of every library service in the UK
- Has influenced publishers and booksellers
- New approaches in education and literacy
- Major media impact – book clubs on tv, radio and in newspapers

The reader-centred approach

- Make reading visible
- Value each reader's individuality
- Celebrate what reading means to people

Connecting readers

- Book swaps
- Book chains
- Messages in books
- Book of the day
- Reader-centred events
- Websites www.reader2reader.net

Reader-centred events

- You don't need a celebrity
- You don't even need an author
- You just need readers!
- Example: a wine and book tasting

Outside the library

- Outreach takes more time and energy than in-library so be clear why you're doing it
- Think about who you want to reach and what will engage them
- Short burst intense publicity or longer-term partnership building?
- Physical or virtual depending on target audience

The reader-centred approach

- Look for situations where people will pick up a book
- Create small manageable choices
- Make sure there are a range of reading experiences on offer

Regional cancer treatment centre

- Modern building, all facilities
- Day patients stay up to 7 hours and come on repeat visits
- Pleasant environment but reading matter limited to Readers' Digest and out-of-date women's magazines

Coming back into the library

- If you reach readers outside you will want to bring them to visit – does the library feel welcoming?
- Check your first impression – is it all desks and functions? Are there barriers? Can you see books?
- Does organising the books seem more important than promoting them?

First impression

3 areas where libraries could be more reader-friendly

- Create browsing spaces
- Furniture which displays books better
- Get rid of labels!

Caged books don't encourage touching

Display designed to tempt passers-by

The reader-centred library

- Dynamic not static
- Expects independent use and self-service
- Tempting sightlines
- Books keep changing
- Staff out in space not behind desk
- Break old divisions and hierarchies to present topics in new ways

Frontline course

- Interactive online course for frontline staff in the adult lending library
- Can be taken anywhere anytime - all you need is internet access and an email address (can be hotmail)
- 7000 library staff in UK, Ireland, Australia and New Zealand now using it

Approach

- Structured learning builds through 7 modules / short course option of 4 modules
- Balance of theory and practical tasks
- Online learning immediately applied in everyday work situation
- Starting point is readers not staff

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