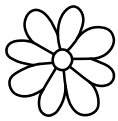


(Re)Love Your Books!



(Re)Love Your Books!

Eco-Topics:



Biodiversity



**Global
Citizenship**



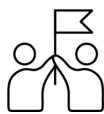
Waste

(Re)Love Your Books promotes both reading and planet-friendly action by empowering young people to run a pop-up, second-hand book swap or sale in their school. This project aims to reduce waste, conserve natural resources, and inspire a life-long love of reading.



Green Skills and Learning

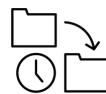
Young people will develop the following skills in a green context:



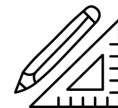
Collaboration



Communication
& Marketing



Project
Management



Design

Young people will develop their knowledge of:

- the environmental impact of book production and waste.
- the steps involved in planning and delivering a swap/sales event.

The Issue

According to carbon footprint expert Mike Berners-Lee, producing a single paperback book generates around 1kg of CO₂E. When books are printed on non-recycled paper, it means carbon-absorbing, biodiversity-supporting trees are being cut down too. While it's difficult to pinpoint exactly how many trees are lost to the book industry each year, we know it's a lot!

Even worse, once enjoyed, many millions of books end up in landfill each year. These are books that could be read and enjoyed by others!

Giving up on reading isn't the answer. In fact, reading is a relatively low-carbon activity, especially when compared to screen-based alternatives like watching TV or gaming.

And, research shows that reading for pleasure boosts academic achievement, supports mental wellbeing, and helps young people develop empathy and confidence. Yet despite its many benefits, a 2025 report from the National Literacy Trust and Twinkl revealed that reading for pleasure is at an all-time low among young people, with only one in three saying they enjoy reading in their free time.

This project tackles waste by giving books a second life. It also makes books more accessible and creates a shared experience to promote reading for pleasure.



Find out more

- [Children and young people's reading in 2025 - National Literacy Trust](#) (report)
- [Publishers Try Skinnier Books to Save Money and Emissions - BBC](#) (news article)
- [How to be a More Environmentally Friendly Reader - Penguin](#) (news article)

Follow These Steps



1. Ask for permission to host your book swap or sale

Before doing anything, seek approval from a key decision-maker in your school (e.g., your headteacher or a member of senior leadership).

You may need to bring some persuasive arguments to the discussion. Consider the benefits that a second-hand book sale/swap will have on both pupils and planet, and gather a few interesting stats about the impacts of book production and waste on the environment.

2. Decide upon your time, date, and location

Once you have the green light, it's time to set the key details for your event:

- Will it be during or outside of school hours? If during school hours, consider creating a rota so classes visit in small groups to avoid overcrowding.
- Will it be a standalone event or tie in with other events? You might decide '(Re)Love Your Books' is a great way to celebrate World Book Day, or run it just before the summer holidays so pupils have reading material for their time off.
- Where will you host it? Choose a space large enough for donations and browsing, and make sure it's available for set-up on the day or in the days before your event.
- Is additional equipment needed? How will you display the books? Do you need extra tables or shelves? Could you make the experience more inviting with comfortable seating for pupils to relax whilst they browse and choose?
- Will it be a sale, swap, or something else? The primary goal is to reduce waste and promote reading, you might let schoolmates take books for free, give tokens for each donation to exchange for a book, or charge a small fee to raise funds for eco-projects or other environmental causes. Decide what's best for you!

3. Decide upon your time, date, and location

Once the basics are planned, think about how you can turn this into an exciting, shared experience for your school community. Here are a few ideas to get started:

- **Add Reviews:** Ask schoolmates to write a short review or recommendation and place it inside each donated book.
- **Mystery Book Wraps:** Wrap some books in paper and write clues about the story on the wrapping. This encourages pupils to try something new without judging by the cover.

- **Selfie Station:** Set up a colourful space where pupils can take a photo with their chosen book! You could even create a display or digital collage celebrating reading and your (Re)Love Your Books project.

These are just three ideas. There are plenty more ways to make your event fun! Use one of these or come up with your own creative twist.

4. Drive Donations

Now your event's details are confirmed and you've given thought on how to make it extra special, it's time to start thinking about donation logistics.

- **Set a specific day or week and a clear drop-off location for donations.** Being precise helps your school community know exactly when and where to contribute, giving them a clear goal and making participation easy.
- **Consider what donations you will accept.** Do you really want old Guinness World Records from before you were born? Will you only accept books aimed at your school's age group? Will you take books that need minor repairs, and if so, do you have the time, skills, and tools to fix them before the event?
- **When asking for donations, include details about any extras you've planned.** For example, are you asking for book reviews inside donations, or names and classes so you can map where books came from and are going to?
- **Find a storage solution.** If donations come in quickly, you'll need somewhere to store and sort them before the event. Speak with a member of staff, such as your site manager, to find a suitable space close to your drop-off point to avoid extra work.

5. Spread the word

Your plans are in place, now it's time to get everyone involved. Clear communication and building excitement will maximise the impact of your event.

Plan how to share the news. For example:

- Announce it during an assembly.
- Create displays or bright, eye-catching posters in busy areas.
- Use any other available channels e.g. school newsletters, social media, and parent apps.

[Continued on next page]

Don't forget to include key details:

- How, where, and when to make donations.
- The time, date, and location of the event.
- If you have created a rota for operating during school hours, share this with class teachers so they know exactly when their allocated slot is.
- How the event works (e.g., will they need cash on the day? Will they need to donate something to obtain tokens etc.).
- Any special touches you've planned, like mystery wraps or book reviews.

With the word out there, donations will begin to arrive! Try to sort them as they come in as this will save time when setting up the event.

6. Deliver the event

When the big day arrives, make sure you have a plan to keep everything running smoothly.

Start with the setup. Take inspiration from bookshops. They're designed to make people feel welcome and encourage exploration of the amazing worlds inside the books on offer!

- **Merchandise.** It's important to make your stock look appealing. For example, are there any standout titles that could be displayed more prominently to highlight the quality of donations on offer?
- **Organise your stock for easy browsing.** Sort books by age group, category, or genre so schoolmates can find what interests them quickly.
- **Create a welcoming atmosphere.** Can you provide comfy seats for schoolmates to relax whilst browsing books? Could you create pro-reading posters and signs to make the space more inviting? Or is it possible to play quiet background music for added ambience?

On the day:

- **Be available to help.** Explain how the system works. For example, it might be cash, tokens, or something else. Show schoolmates how books are organised and share why the event is important. Consider creating and wearing badges or lanyards so everyone knows who to ask for help and information.
- **Manage the flow.** Stick to your rota - if you have one - but stay flexible and mindful that there may be delays. If you don't have a rota, you might consider a queuing system to prevent overcrowding.
- **Monitor your impact.** Keep track of how many books are redistributed. This will help you measure success and set a baseline for future events. With each book estimated to save around 1kg of CO₂E, you can easily turn this data into approximate carbon savings to showcase your positive environmental impact.

7. Epilogue

Your book swap doesn't end when the last book is taken! Reflecting and celebrating will help you plan for future impacts.

- **Celebrate your Success.** Share photos from the day, post on your school's website, or write a newsletter story.
- **Gather feedback.** If you plan to run future events, ask attendees what worked well and what could be improved. A quick survey or suggestion box can provide useful insights and help with future planning.
- **Decide what to do with leftover books.** Will you store them for future swaps or donate them to charity/your school library?

Green Careers

Author

Like art, writing has long driven social change. To Kill a Mockingbird exposed racial injustice, Anne Frank's diary highlighted the courage to resist oppression, and Mary Shelley's Frankenstein questioned the ethics of science. Today, authors increasingly tackle environmental issues. Children's writer Sarah Roberts makes these issues clear for young readers, while climate activist Mikaela Loach empowers audiences with practical steps for change.

Sustainable Publishing Professional

This role focuses on reducing the publishing industry's environmental impact. Key responsibilities include sourcing sustainable materials for printed products, managing the ethical disposal or recycling of unsold inventory, calculating carbon emissions, and ensuring compliance with industry-wide sustainability standards and initiatives.



Go Further

- Create a permanent book exchange facility in your school.
- Plan a (Re)Love Your Books event for staff members and parents.
- Organise a book swap with another school, with their donations being available in your school and your donations available in their school.

Curriculum Ideas

- **Computing.** Design a simple database or spreadsheet to record and track donated books to find out the most popular books, authors, or genres.
- **English.** Write a review of a donated book.
- **History.** Explore how the printing press changed Britain. How did making reading materials affordable change society?

