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## **Booked Up gets the thumbs up from Year 7 pupils**

[www.bookedup.org.uk](http://www.bookedup.org.uk)

Over 90% of pupils think that Booked Up is a good idea, according to an evaluation into the free books programme run by literature charity Booktrust. The programme which gives each Year 7 pupil in England a free book from a choice of 17 specially selected titles is in its fifth year.

Extremely positive findings from the evaluation which surveyed pupils and parents before and after their participation in Booked Up 2010, showed that over 50% of students stated that they were reading books more often as a result of Booked Up and that, crucially, they **enjoyed** reading books more following the programme. In addition, almost half of students surveyed discussed books more with their family whilst almost a third felt that they read with their family more after participating in Booked Up.

### **Key findings:**

- 92% of pupils think that Booked Up is a good idea.
- More than half of students said that they were reading books more often and enjoying books more since receiving their Booked Up book.
- 44% of pupils discuss books more with their friends and family as a result of Booked Up, and 29% said that Booked Up had increased the amount that they read with friends and family.
- An increase in library visits: 16% of boys and 28% of girls said they are visiting their public library more often since Booked Up.
- More visits to bookshops: 56% of pupils stated that Booked Up had encouraged them to visit bookshops more frequently.
- Book purchasing: Over one third of students (36%) reported that Booked Up had led them to buy books for themselves or recommend the purchase of books to friends and family.
- Book recommendations: Half of all students recommended their book to a friend or family member.
- Funny books are the most popular type of book to read overall: 70% of pupils enjoy reading them
- Parental impact: 66% of parents surveyed felt that Booked Up has led to them talking more to their child about books, whilst 32% have been prompted to purchase books for their child.

**Melanie Flynn, Booked Up Programme Manager, said:** 'We're delighted that the Year 7s surveyed were so positive about their Booked Up experience, and very pleased to be delivering Booked Up across England for a fifth year. The 17 books on this year's list



once again offer something for every reader, with a fantastic selection of authors and genres to spark excitement and enthusiasm among Year 7s.'

### **Breakdown of findings:**

#### **Booked up encourages library and bookshop visits**

Before Booked Up, almost 60% of the pupils surveyed were members of their local library, whilst 32% of pupils visited libraries in their spare time. After Booked Up, an additional 24% said that they were encouraged to join a library and 56% were encouraged to visit bookshops more often.

***'She has shown more interest in going to the library and wants different types of reading books.'*** Parent

#### **Book choice**

The fact that Booked Up allows students to choose their own book was a very important factor in the Year 7 pupils' propensity to read with over 71% stating that it made them more likely to read a book. *Love Aubrey* by Suzanne LaFleur was the most popular 2010 title *and* the most enjoyed book.

Funny books are the most popular type of book to read overall (70% enjoy reading them) with poetry and plays being amongst the least popular (enjoyed by 18% and 14% respectively). Boys' favourite types of books were action/adventure with girls' preferring the overall favourite genre, funny books. However, discussions taking place at schools as part of the evaluation, highlighted that genre is not always important when selecting books to read, but that students (particularly boys) are also attracted by books that are in a series.

#### **Book recommendations**

Half of all pupil respondents recommended their book to a friend or family member, whilst almost a quarter (23%) read it to their brother or sister. Over one third of respondents said that reading their Booked Up book had prompted them to read another book to one of their siblings. Over half (57%) of Year 7 students have discussed their book with fellow students. The programme has prompted 36% of students to either buy books themselves or to recommend the purchase of books to friends/families. In addition, 64% of boys and 78% of girls report that it has encouraged them to try a new author

#### **Books and reading in the home**

Over 95% of Year 7 pupils surveyed before Booked Up had books of their own; this is in comparison to 84% who owned mobile phones. Over 90% have regular access to a computer and the internet at home. Despite this, before Booked Up only 67% of parents thought that reading for pleasure was very important. After Booked Up this figure rose to 82%. This is particularly interesting as the before Booked Up findings showed that parents often overestimate how frequently their children read books with 69% stating that their children enjoy reading books in their spare time in comparison to just 56% of pupils that reported that they did.



***'When I got the survey I asked my son about it, who told me that the book was AWESOME and that he loved it. Then he told me about the programme and that he had been given the book, finishing with a suitably vague "didn't I tell you about it?" 12 year old boys!!!' Parent***

### **Digital pastimes dominate**

The most popular activity selected by Year 7 pupils was surfing the internet with 81% of pupils before Booked Up stating that they did so. This is in comparison to just 56% who said that they spent their spare time reading books, with the most popular place to read, being at home in bed or in their bedroom. When asked what the barriers to reading were 58% of children stated that they would read more if they had more spare time, with socialising on the internet and in person taking priority. 57% of respondents agreed that they would read more if they had more books that interested them.

### **E-Books**

Although such a high percentage of pupils take part in digital activities, less than 2% of parents/carers stated that their children had access to a Sony E-Reader or Kindle. However over 40% of parents/carers would consider purchasing a device of this nature in the future.

### **Lasting impact**

24% of parents/carers felt that Booked Up has had a positive impact on their children. Over 50% of these parents felt that the impact would be long lasting in contrast to just 10% who felt that it would be temporary. When prompted about the specific impacts of Booked Up, over one third agreed that Booked Up had increased their child's enjoyment of reading books. 66% felt that the programme has led to them talking more to their child about books, whilst a third have been prompted to purchase books for their child.

***'She now loves books.'*** Parent

***'He enjoyed the book and kept talking about – I have this week ordered another in the series – Raptor – because he enjoyed the first one so much.'*** Parent

\*\*\*For the full evaluation and further information on Booked Up please contact Alice Ingall at [alice.ingall@booktrust.org.uk](mailto:alice.ingall@booktrust.org.uk) or 020 8875 4827

### **Notes to Editors**

#### **2010 Booked Up evaluation report**

In September 2010 ERS was commissioned by Booktrust to undertake an impact evaluation of the Booked Up programme. The specific focus for the assessment of impact was on: reading frequency; confidence around reading; attitudes towards reading and books; and family book consumption and purchasing. ERS analysed the responses of 2,378 students in 52 schools to the pre-Booked Up survey, and 1,057 responses in 34 schools to the post-Booked Up survey. The data on parents and carers is based on the analysis of 1,497 responses to the pre-Booked Up survey, and 274 responses to the



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post-Booked Up survey. The research was undertaken concurrently with a programme-wide evaluation of Booked Up. This evaluation included a survey to which 11,009 students responded.

**Booked Up** allows each Year 7 pupil to make their own choice of book from a selection of 17 titles that include fiction, non-fiction and poetry. The programme is designed so that there is a book that will appeal to every child, whatever their ability or needs. Its purpose is to encourage independent reading and support reading for pleasure as children make the sometimes difficult transition from primary to secondary education.

All information about Booked Up, including the 2011 list of books can be found on the website [www.bookedup.org.uk](http://www.bookedup.org.uk)

A Booktrust panel – including school librarians, a journalist, a teacher and a children's book author – selected the books, which are intended to stimulate reading for pleasure, and reflect a diverse range of interest and styles.

**Booktrust** is an independent charity dedicated to encouraging people of all ages and cultures to engage with books. The written word underpins all our activity and enables us to fulfil our vision of inspiring a lifelong love of books for all. Booktrust is responsible for a number of successful national reading promotions, sponsored book prizes and creative reading projects aimed at encouraging readers to discover and enjoy books. These include the Orange Prize for Fiction, the Children's Laureate, the Roald Dahl Funny Prize and Bookstart, the national programme that works through locally based organisations to give a free pack of books to young children, with guidance materials for parents and carers. See [www.booktrust.org.uk](http://www.booktrust.org.uk)