



EDUCATION TEAM REVIEW of 2024

Working with over 50 Somerset schools
www.wellsfestivalofliterature.org.uk



WELCOME

Wells Festival of Literature is run entirely by volunteers enabling the Education Team to spend all the profits from the Festival on encouraging the love of reading and literature in children in over 50 local schools. We donate library and classroom books and fund enriching experiences such as theatre trips, workshops with authors and visits to bookshops. This year we have also helped with library renovations, contributed to the purchase of book vending machines and funded transport costs. This review gives an overview of our projects in 2024. We hope that you enjoy reading it.



POEMS BY POST



A Poem written especially for Wells Festival of Literature by A. F. Harrold.

I keep my poems short
so they fit into the space
a postcard sets aside
on the backside of its face.

Sometimes readers get confused
and wonder why my odes
always seem to end
with unrhymed postcodes

"I wanted to say a HUGE THANK YOU for organising A. F. Harrold to come and visit our school. It was an amazing experience and a great start to the week. I have had so much positive feedback from parents and children and it has been lovely to see so many children walking around with his poetry books." *January 2024*

This year it was the turn of pupils from Stoberry Park, St Vigor & St John's Primary and Chewton Mendip Primary to receive a weekly poem on a postcard, followed by a visit from the author himself, writer A. F. Harrold. Now in its eighth year, this project encourages children to enjoy and experiment with poetry.

CORAM BEANSTALK

We have supported Coram Beanstalk for many years in its work recruiting and training volunteers to work with children to develop confidence and promote a love of reading. Schools who subscribe can access a range of additional services and support. We currently enable over 40 children in 8 local schools to receive this help.



"I really like that we get to read a really good book we wouldn't choose ourselves and discuss our thoughts with others."

West Pennard 2024

SCHOOLS BOOKCLUB

Reading for pleasure benefits wellbeing, confidence and learning. The Schools Bookclub allows pupils from rural primaries, who love reading, to meet termly and talk about a book of their choice. Lively discussion, differing opinions and listening to others' perspectives makes for a rewarding and fun afternoon. All the books are funded by WFL and added to the school library.



Two visits to Waterstones, Wells, were made by small groups of pupils from Stoke St. Michael and Ditchat Schools. They explored the Children's Section to find books which interested and excited them. With the help of enthusiastic staff, children pored over a wide variety of books and each pupil left, proudly clutching their chosen selection to take home. All books were funded by WFL.

WATERSTONES



"It was joyful to see two pupils, who are normally reluctant to read, finding books that suited them perfectly."

February 2024

DRAMA



Shepton Mallet Infants and Hemington Primary enjoyed a trip to The Egg in Bath. We also funded St. Paul's Junior School's performance at the Tobacco Factory, Bristol, under the auspices of the Shakespeare Schools Foundation. We supported All the World's Our Playground Festival, in particular the residency programme which brought 6 theatre companies and shows to 10 schools in addition to theatre festivals in Shepton Mallet and St. John's First School in Frome.

YEAR 6 EVENT

In Cedars Hall with author Lindsay Galvin



Our Year 6 Author Event is one of the highlights of the year. In previous years it has been led by, amongst others, Ross Montgomery, M.G Leonard, Dan Smith and Maz Evans. This year the bestselling author Lindsay Galvin visited a packed Cedars Hall. Over 3 days Lindsay mesmerised more than 1000 children with her mythical and historical tales of phoenixes, dragons and octopuses. She talked about the experiences which led her to become an author, shared practical ideas on how to write and answered some brilliant questions from the children. After the event she chatted to the children whilst signing hundreds of books. The children and adults left smiling and talking all things books and writing.

484.7kg of
subsidised books

34 local schools
attended

1029 children
joined us

We were able to fund transport costs and make this event free to all schools, and with a discount from publishers, Macmillan, we sold 1,864 books at £2 each to the children.

"I had a thoroughly enjoyable week at Wells Festival, a true career highlight. You are a very special, dedicated team creating an event that has true impact on children's lives. Honoured to be a part of it!" *Lindsay Galvin*



MEET ONE OF OUR SCHOOLS

Piers Ranger, Headteacher,
St. Benedict's C of E VA
Junior School.

"Once again, in 2024, we have appreciated the support of the WFL team, who have been tireless in their mission to enthuse our children to be readers. Their generous funding of the visit of explorer and filmmaker, Matt Dickinson, inspired our pupils to be adventurous in their writing and to aspire to be writers, recorders and adventurers. Not content with this the team also helped to fund our Book Vending Machine and donated books towards filling it. This has motivated our children to read even more so that they can win themselves a book by hitting their targets.

"As if that weren't enough, our pupils also got to visit Cedars Hall in Wells to be part of the audience for author Lindsay Galvin's inspiring talk. As ever, they returned to school with renewed vigour and keen to get writing. The work of the WFL team is invaluable in facilitating affordable author visits and experiences for local schools, and their passion for the world of books and reading is so evident that it inspires not only the pupils of St. Ben's but also the staff and parents. A HUGE thank you from our whole school community!"

A GALLERY OF EVENTS



Emma Carroll. "It was the best workshop from an author we have ever had." *Year 6 teacher*



Tracey Corderoy. "It was a magical experience for the children" *Axbridge First School*



Gareth P. Jones said, "It was amazing to see all those children walking out clutching copies of my books."



Jasbinder Bilan. "Jasbinder was truly inspirational, and I am sure it has benefited the children immensely." *Class teacher*

We also funded school visits from Young Adult author Tia Fisher and local writer Rebecca Gryspeerdt

DONATIONS

We donated class and library books, reading incentive rewards and even helped to fund 2 book vending machines. These were just some of the projects we supported in 2024.

2 partly funded book vending machines

1864 books sold at £2 & 338 at £1

932 books donated to local schools



Looking forward to **2025**

We are looking forward to working with more schools, while continuing to support projects that encourage a love of reading and put even more books into the hands of local children. We are always happy to hear from schools with ideas which we might help fund. Emails sent to admin@wellsfestivalofliterature.org.uk will be forwarded to our team.

A big THANK YOU for all your support in 2024 and best wishes for 2025 from the Education team.

Bug, Sue, Nilaru, Irene, Carole & Fiona

