

Ideas for Book Week

These ideas have been extracted and edited from previous Book Week publications created by the Ipswich District Teacher-Librarian Network over the years, unless otherwise attributed.

Form a Book Week planning committee and decide how to celebrate as a whole school.

10 Secrets to Running a Powerful Book Week

(from *Reading is My Secret Power* - IDTL Network 2019)

1. Plan ahead! Start writing articles about Book Week in Term 2 for your school newsletter or website. Talk about shortlisted books, reviews, ideas for local library activities, ideas for Book Week costumes, advertise your competitions and finally your Book Week events.
2. Order the shortlisted books as soon as possible or work with what you have. Sometimes it is difficult to acquire the books when publishers go into reprint. Check your local library for copies and consider finding picture books in StoryBox Library. Some public libraries offer free access to members. Storyboxlibrary.com.au
3. Prepare a PowerPoint presentation of all shortlisted books and theme ideas to show at a staff meeting. Encourage teachers to plan their own Book Week costumes to model a love of reading to their classes.
4. Encourage whole school participation by running a class-based competition such as decorating your door using the Book Week theme.
5. Create a sense of anticipation and excitement by setting up displays in the library, running competitions, planning dress-ups and Book Week parade or assembly.
6. Visit cbca.org.au to find what merchandise is available to purchase to promote Book Week.
7. Have a gold coin donation rather than prizes for costumes. Donations can go to Indigenous Literacy Foundation or Room to Read.
8. Involve students in planning and running Book Week celebrations such as organising music, comparing and leading classes in the parade, helping with book fairs or Book Swaps.
9. Children who enter the Book Week competitions can be invited to Book Week parties in the library with random draws for prizes.
10. Revisit the previous IDTL Network Book Week publications for ideas.

Some more ideas from Barbara Braxton on [Book Week for Beginners](#)

Displays

Displays can be coordinated throughout the school utilising all display areas including doors and windows with different classes responsible for different areas. Each class could adopt a shortlisted title as a focus on base it on the theme.

Have the name or cover of the shortlisted books on posters. Using a digital camera, take photos of kids and print them as small images so they can be posted underneath their favourite title as a vote for the book. It could be in a graph format.

Interpreting the theme is the obvious response to a Book Week display. Students can gain inspiration from the official CBCA Book Week poster to design their own then be part of the display.

Book in a box – Invite each class to create a book in a box. It can be diorama style, but any container can be used to display items that interpret the book. Tiny Worlds created in a makerspace were

described in a previous publication and Book Nooks were outlined in the 2021 publication. Select one of the notable books for the display. Use this PowerPoint to inspire the children.

<https://youtu.be/qZm9XvWIFys>

Staff photos - Display photos of staff taken as children and the cover of their favourite book as a child. Have students match the cover to the staff member.

Selfies - Take photos of children or let them take selfies with their favourite books, swap with other classes or schools to see what they are reading.

Competitions

- Make posters on the theme
- Make posters to promote particular books (Notable, Shortlist or others)
- Write a book/picture book competition
- Bookmark design
- Bookplate design
- Shelf talker competition
- PowerPoint or Book Trailer promotion of a book
- Guess a teacher's favourite book - Take a photo of the teacher with the book but have the cover blurred/pixelated. <https://onlineimagetools.com/pixelate-image>
- Book in a box, book nook or tiny world competition

Other Book Week Ideas

Hold a **Book Week Launch** or a special event such as a whole-school assembly or a celebration with parents. Dress up as a favourite character but carry the book to show which book the character comes from.

Connect with your community. Invite key people in your community to visit the school in the lead up to or during Book Week to be guest readers. Invite an **author or illustrator** to your school.

Information on hosting authors can be found at <https://booklinks.org.au/author-visits/> Bookings need to be made a long time in advance as Book Week is their busiest time of the year.

Find out what National Science Week's theme is and see if it will mash up with the Book Week theme. <https://www.scienceweek.net.au/>

Speed dating -Select a range of books for a class. Children can select a book from the pile and after a one-minute signal, change it for another. At the end of a set time, they choose a book to borrow or talk about.

Hold a book swap day. Bring in your old books to swap. Can be a fund raiser for the Indigenous Literacy Foundation.

Arrange a visit to your local public library or invite a public librarian to visit the school. Check to see if your state library has any special events on during Book Week.

Games

Have children write quiz questions for shortlisted books to ask others in the class. See who gets the highest score

Play 'Celebrity Heads' using book characters. Write the name of a well known book character on a strip of card to fit like a crown. The child wearing it has to guess who they are by asking questions that can only be answered with yes or no

20 questions. A child chooses a book character and others ask them questions to try to guess who they are, but they can only provide yes or no as an answer.

Play charades. Act out part of the story and others guess which book.

Book Week Parade and other options

- Create a Spotify Playlist and make it public to share with others. This one was used for Curious Creatures Wild Minds theme <https://bit.ly/BWeek2020>
- Dedicate a class or year level to one song. Practice dancing and moving in a line prior to your Book Week Parade so students are familiar with 'their' song and can sing along!
- Provide face painting to create characters
- Encourage students to make their own costumes to represent the theme or book characters. These can be masks or hats worn by characters that have been created in class time.
- Decorate your assembly stage area to fit the theme
- Consider a performance instead of a parade. Class or group performances can be based on the theme or shortlisted books. Keep them short.
- Hold an illustration challenge. Invite children or teachers to sign up to take part in an illustration duel. Two flipcharts or white boards, and the challenge is to quickly draw a character as suggested by the audience. Applause indicates a winner or each heat leading p to a final.

Other ideas on parades on [Book Week for Beginners](#) by Barbara Braxton.

Promoting Book Week

Create articles for the school newsletters leading up to Book Week:

- reviews of shortlisted books
- promote local library Book Week activities
- costume ideas
- advertise competitions
- promote book week costumes
- promote own book week events
- get parents involved

Book parade tips from Barbara Braxton

<http://bookweek-for-beginners.wikispaces.com/celebrations> (No longer active)

1. Claim the date early
2. Plan for first thing in the morning so costumes are not ruined at or by recess and can be removed so children can participate in other activities throughout the day.

3. Determine whether 'character' refers to just books, comics, television shows, or Internet games or all of them or just one.
4. If you are limiting it to book characters (which is traditional) decide whether you will allow Disney character costumes that are commercially available because many parents don't have the time/skills/money/interest to make something, remembering if you disallow them many children will not be able to participate
5. Ensure that children know that homemade costumes are perfectly acceptable, so they don't think only store-bought are allowed/desired.
6. If you have a range of ages, perhaps even including the pre-school, consider guidelines so that costumes (especially from the older students) are not too scary. You don't want the parade ruined because a little one is screaming in fear.
7. If you are limiting it to books, consider requiring the child to carry the book on which their interpretation is based.
8. Consider a whole-school theme based on a genre (perhaps historical fiction) or place (such as underwater characters) or even a subject (such as sports). Or if not a whole-school theme, then perhaps a class-theme based on their studies at the time.
9. Consider allocating or having teachers/students select one book, perhaps from the shortlist, as the theme for the whole class to interpret. Means the book has to be well understood, allows for lateral thinking and avoids having 50 Cinderellas or Batmans.
10. If you do decide on one-class, one-book but don't restrict it to the shortlist, make a list of suggestions for each year-level to give teachers a starting point. They may not be as familiar with children's lit as you are.
11. Avoid prizes so those without parents or without parents with the time/skills/money/interest are not marginalised
12. Have loud, clap-along music and each class parades in a circle around the others who are the audience.
13. If a child comes without a costume, decide whether they parade with the class (often looking embarrassed and unhappy) or whether they just remain part of the audience sitting with a class not parading yet.
14. If you know that a child is unlikely to have a costume for whatever reason, invite him/her to make a hat or sandwich board with you at lunchtimes or get a group of volunteers of senior students to start a regular costume-making activity at lunchtimes in T3 for those students. We all know who they are. Set aside some budget money so it can happen because THAT is what the child will remember rather than shelves full of resources.
15. Get someone who knows their children's literature to spruik to add atmosphere
16. Consider making it a mask, a hat, a headband, or a sandwich board parade and make the making of these the art curriculum for the first part of T3 so everyone can be involved.
17. Ensure that teachers get in the spirit and dress up too, even, if like me, they hate fancy dress
18. Year 5/6 will often bow to peer pressure and think this is babyish and uncool (although secretly they would love to be involved) so give them a chance to be involved in the organisation, helping younger students make or wear their costumes, making advertising posters, being junior journalists, being in charge of the music selection and delivery, whatever is on offer to give them responsibility, ease your workload and making it a whole school event.
19. Invite parents and the local media (including your local free suburban newspaper) because it's all advocacy for the teacher librarian's role. Let them see their child having fun so they see their efforts are worth it.
20. Keep the purpose of children having fun clearly in focus – it should not be a competition; no student should be marginalised, and it should be all about the laughter.