

READING PROMOTION TOOLKIT

BEST PRACTICES CHECKLIST

THIS RISE CHILDREN'S READING PROMOTION CHECKLIST BELONGS TO:

This Checklist will guide you, one task at a time. Print or download this sheet and cross things off as you go. These 'tasks' are designed to fit different levels of experience with children's reading promotion: beginner, intermediate and advanced. If you are already doing some of these, go ahead and cross them off too! Not every task will fit every bookseller or bookshop, focus on those that are relevant to your context and set aside those that are not. If you would like to explore any of these tasks more in depth about them or find inspiration in what other booksellers are doing, refer to the matching chapter in the RISE Reading Promotion Catalogue of Best Practices.

SPACE & COMMUNITY:

BEGINNER

- ☐ Carry a diverse* range of books for children and show them off in your window display.
- ☐ Pick one shelf or corner and turn it into a cosy reading area for families and children or a more secluded hangout area for teenagers.
Display books face-out and at eye level for your smallest customers.
- ☐ Add one extra comfy seat like an armchair, bean bag, or even a hammock!
Short on space? Floor cushions work great for groups.
- ☐ Lay out an extra copy of a book for smaller kids to play with while their caregiver browses the shelves.
- ☐ Write shelf-talkers or little handwritten staff recommendations for children's books in your shop.
e.g. 'Staff Pick', 'Ages 11+', 'What to read after [popular book or series]'
- ☐ Ask each team member to name their favourite children's book and write them down on a shared list.
Option to hang it up, match books to staff names as a conversation starter or update it regularly.
- ☐ Make your space more accommodating for families to stay longer.
Breastfeeding-friendly facilities, a changing mat in the toilets, or even a spare set of diapers signal that families of babies and toddlers are genuinely welcome.

INTERMEDIATE

- ☐ Actively review and improve the space based on families' feedback.
- ☐ Install a free library shelf where children can take or swap books.
By having it right at the entrance of the store, you signal that kids and teenagers are welcome, even if they cannot afford to buy a book.
- ☐ Curate a 'surprise box' based on a specific theme/age group/season to purchase.

ADVANCED Going well? Consider offering them once a month as a subscription service.

ORGANIZING EVENTS:

BEGINNER

- ☐ Choose one event idea from the catalogue to try (e.g. book club, creative workshop, window reading etc.) and pick a regular slot (e.g. first Wednesday of the month).
Consistency helps customers know what to expect and for activities to become a habit!
- ☐ Creative workshops for children happening in your area? Reach out and offer to host one yourself.
- ☐ Start regular Storytime Sessions.

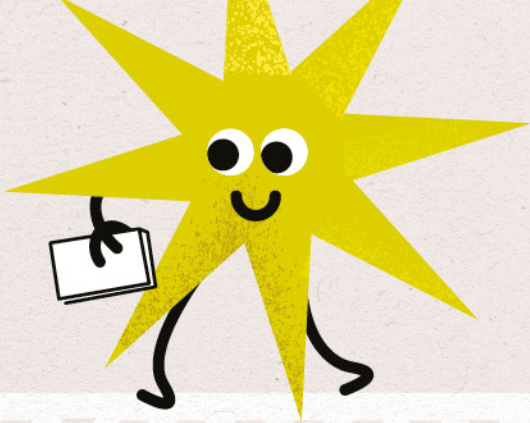
INTERMEDIATE

- ☐ Once you established a rhythm: Invite new 'Storytellers', like actors or drag performers who create engaging reading experiences for kids.
- ☐ Invite a (local) children's author for a reading, signing and/or Q&A.

ADVANCED

- ☐ Plan a reading festival or multi-day event with interactive stations and workshops.
Feels like too much? Take it step-by-step, each chapter in the catalogue has ideas to draw from when planning your festival programme.
- ☐ Choose a theme, season or age range to build it around.
- ☐ Decide on your format: a single day or multiple days? In-store, outreach or larger venue?
- ☐ Brainstorm interactive elements and workshops (or flip through the examples of other booksellers in chapter 3)
- ☐ Will you invite partners to join you? (chapter 7)

*stories with characters, voices, and experiences that represent plural lived realities.



GAME ON: INTERACTIVE & PLAYFUL APPROACHES

BEGINNER

- ☐ Set up a 'recommendation station' and invite young readers to write or draw short reviews.
The young authors might even allow you to display them for other children to see!
- ☐ Look up one (inter-) national, seasonal or local reading event (e.g. World Book Day).
Are there any posters or campaign kits you could put up? Check if there any activities you could plan or host in your shop that go along with it.

INTERMEDIATE

- ☐ Create a sticker or stamp reward for children who finish a book.
And if any grown-ups ask: yes, picture books count too!
- ☐ Set up a Children's Book Award where kids vote for their favourite.
Depending on your shop, you can either choose a small group of jurors or a very big one that crowns the book of the month/year. Display the winning book in the shop.

ADVANCED Reach out to potential sponsor- and partnerships and make it even bigger!

- ☐ Introduce a little friendly competition (reading aloud, writing, reading 10 min/day)
Don't forget to decide on a prize beforehand. Even though this one's more about the journey and not the destination, your winners might argue very differently.

ADVANCED

- ☐ Turn your competition into a recurring programme with schools or youth organisations. Create templates, timelines, materials so partners can join more easily.

BRIDGING BOOKSHOPS AND DIGITAL SPACES:

BEGINNER

- ☐ Start an email sign-up sheet in-store for caregivers and parents.
- ☐ Browse BookTok, Bookstagram or BookTube to see what's trending with younger audiences.
Trends move fast, so you'll likely need to repeat this every so often.
- ☐ Follow 5 new 'book-ish' accounts on social media for inspiration.
Children's book authors, bookfluencers, children's book illustrators, (specialised children's books) booksellers, publishers specialised in children and young adult books.

INTERMEDIATE

- ☐ Send one newsletter with age-specific 'Recommended Reads'.
- ☐ Find out which digital platforms young readers in your area actually use.
- ☐ Set up a 'BookTok' table with the latest trending (bookseller approved) titles or merchandise.
- ☐ Upload a children's book recommendation to your social media.
Record a short video or try photo slides, whatever feels most authentic; depending on your shop there may already be templates or graphics you could use.

ADVANCED

- ☐ Record a current BookTok format trend e.g. 'books I couldn't put down' stack or dramatic first-line readings.



LEARNING, COLLABORATIONS & SPONSORSHIPS:

BEGINNER

- ☐ Contact one local school or teacher and invite them for a visit.
Ready for a more intensive partnership? Establish regular meeting sessions for local teachers where you present new and relevant books for classroom use.

INTERMEDIATE Offer to attend parent evenings, open school days and staff meetings to talk about new children's and young adult literature – and to introduce your bookshop.

- ☐ Ask team members (and yourself of course) if there's a skill or topic they'd like to learn more about.
Look for trainings/resources and chances are your team already consists of a variety of experts; you could dedicate time to set up an internal skill-sharing session!

INTERMEDIATE

- ☐ Ask a nearby café or cake shop if they'd offer a small discount/voucher for caregivers while their children attend one of your events.
- ☐ Ask one local school library if they need guidance in finding new titles.
Ready to deepen the relationships? Set up a teachers' and/or librarians' reading circle or networking event for local teachers!
- ☐ Leave event flyers or branded material where families spend a lot of time.
e.g. ask your local paediatrician, speech therapy practice, or community centre if you can lay out flyers in their space or offer sample books or reading material to keep children occupied – featuring your bookshop's name and address.

ADVANCED

- ☐ Build an ongoing partnership with one or two local schools – agree on a regular programme together, whether that's termly visits, reading lists, book fairs, or classroom author events.
- ☐ Offer a structured internship or work experience placement for young people interested in bookselling.
- ☐ Pitch a joint reading initiative to your local council, cultural office, or city network.
- ☐ Offer a 'Bookseller for a Day' behind-the-scenes experience for children.

INTERMEDIATE You could also ask for questions online and host a virtual Q&A session or record 'a day in the bookshop' vlog for your social media.

BEGINNER, INTERMEDIATE AND ADVANCED

- ☐ Swap ideas and notes with other booksellers – e.g. at the next RISE Bookselling conference!

