D&AD New Blood Awards

Brief set by
Penguin

In collaboration with
Amanda Jones
(The Gate)

Reimagine the role of reading, books and authors in young people's learning experience

Related Disciplines
Open

Deadline
23 March 2021, 5pm GMT

The backstory

Penguin make books for everyone, because a book can change anyone. Reading the right book at the right time can change the course of your life, and our school years are particularly crucial for development and success. However, Penguin have a challenge on their hands.

A study in 2013 found that reading for fun improves young people's brains, not just in literacy but across all subjects. And reading for enjoyment has been reported as more important for young people's success than their family's socio-economic status (OECD, 2002). But with 40% of 14 to 16 year olds agreeing that they can't find anything to read that interests them (National Literary Trust), this audience's school-time engagement with books risks having long-term effects.

The problem? Young people don't see people they can relate to in the literature they're reading. Across the three major exam boards in England, there are 65 possible GCSE English Literature set texts. 56 of those are written by White authors. Of the nine books written by authors of colour, four were introduced just last year, and only one exam board features a novel or play written by a Black author. Because of this, people are becoming disillusioned with the education they are receiving, leading to further enhanced socioeconomic divides. An example of this in action is that after GCSEs, young people are opting out of studying English Literature at significant rates, with numbers choosing to take the subject at A Level falling by 25% between 2016 and 2020 – the highest of any major subject.

As a brand that consistently works to improve young people's connection with the written word, Penguin want to be at the forefront of a revolution in using books and authors to bring to life the joy of reading.

What's the challenge?

Reimagine the role of books, reading and authors for secondary school students in the UK (11-18 year olds) and enable young adults to engage with a wider range of books and authors who reflect a diverse and inclusive society.

This could come to life through, for example, events with authors sharing their writing journeys, lesson resources that speak to students' experiences, re-imagining the structure of a classroom space or an activism campaign to diversify the books that students study and more.

Whatever you choose, you need to use books and authors to bring to life the joy of learning through a more diverse range of perspectives.

Who are we talking to?

Secondary school students in the UK from year 7 (11 year olds) all the way through to year 13 (18 year olds). Your idea could focus on one year group, or entire schools, but you must ensure it could be translated across the UK to students from a range of backgrounds. This doesn't mean it needs to be one-size-fits-all, you could consider how an inner-city school would engage differently to a remote countryside school for example.

Think about what school and learning means to this audience. It is so much more than just a site for learning in the classroom. It is a space to meet friends and learn social lessons too.

This is an audience that, outside the classroom, has access to all kinds of information in the palm of their hands through smartphones. Think about how you can use this to not only bring them back to physical books, but also engage around them in the digital space too.

Things to think about

Reflect modern society
Diversity is key to nailing this brief. Make sure your idea reflects the modern day make-up of the UK and brings voices of colour to the forefront.

Bring the authors to life as well as the books
Don't forget that books aren't just words on a page, there's a person behind them too. How could you bring in the authors themselves to the learning environment, including the author's own life and experience? This applies whether they lived in the distant past or regularly tweeting today.

Think beyond the traditional reader
Really investigate what books mean to young people. You don't have to be a bookworm to be inspired by books, they have a place in everyone's lives.

Penguin is the driving force
No matter your idea, Penguin should be at the heart of it. That means you need to think about Penguin's offerings and how they could add value to the learning experience. It's not just physical books. They run programmes like Penguin Talks (a programme of free creative talks for school children around the UK) and Puffin World of Stories (which aims to address some of the key challenges facing reading for pleasure in schools). They've also recently announced a new programme called Lit in Colour, which is focused on getting more writers of colour into the curriculum.

Also bear in mind that only 22% of young adults know about the work Penguin currently do with 14-18 year olds.

Things to avoid
This brief is open to a wide range of responses, anything from ad campaigns to clever designs to service-led solutions...

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But there are a few things to avoid. Do not include:

- Book cover designs
- Unrealistic large-scale events
- Food or clothing
- Logo changes/redesigns

Don't be constrained
Don't think your idea needs to fit into the current mould of 'education'. If you could start from the drawing board, what would you want education to look like?

And remember, education doesn't just happen in the classroom. Your idea can span anywhere in the learning experience, from after school clubs to lunchtimes, or in students' homes.

Think post-COVID-19
We know the world looks a little different right now, but don't worry about making your idea fit into current regulations around COVID. Feel free to think about how COVID may affect the learning experience longer term, but make sure your idea lives in the near-future rather than the present.

The important stuff

This is a big-thinking brief, and the way you solve it is up to you. But some things to bear in mind:

- This isn't about creating a lesson plan or devising a brand new curriculum. Think about how your idea could instigate these changes instead.
- Books and authors must be at the centre of your idea.
- This isn't just about getting books physically into classrooms. It's about making reading and books an engaging part of young people's education.

Document your research and development to give the judges a peek at your process once you've wowed them with your solution.

What and how to submit: Read ***Preparing Your Entries*** before you get started for full format guidelines.

Main (essential)**:**

Either a **presentation video** (max. 2 min) OR **JPEG slides** (max. 8), showing your solution.

Optional (judges may view this if they wish)**:**

Interactive work (websites, apps, etc); if your main piece is **JPEGs**, you can also submit **video** (max. 1 min total); if your main piece is **video**, you can also submit **JPEGs** (max. 4).

Further Information

Helpful links

Penguin Talks
penguin.co.uk/company/creative-responsibility/penguin-talks.html

Puffin World of Stories
puffinworldofstories.co.uk

Reading for fun improves children's brains, The Guardian
theguardian.com/books/booksblog/2013/sep/16/reading-improves-childrens-brains

Children and young people's reading in 2019, National Literary Trust
literacytrust.org.uk/research-services/research-reports/children-and-young-peoples-reading-in-2019