Reading Newsletter

Spring 2026

Welcome to the reading newsletter with guest editors Zarah and Isla from Year 6...

It has been another brilliant term of reading at Strand on the Green Junior School. This newsletter has just a few of the highlights. Please share this with your child as it contains some helpful info about competitions.

Ofsted

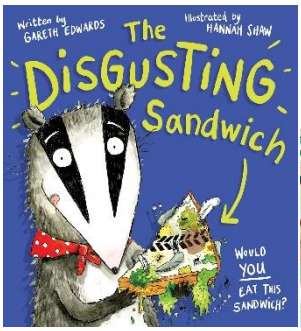
Many parents/carers might have heard that this term we had a visit from the Ofsted inspectors. We were very proud to hear their comments about our commitment to reading at Strand and we thought it would be good for you see exactly what they said.

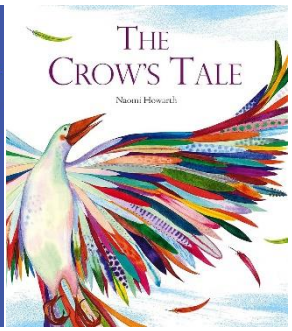
Reading is a priority and a strength. Children are well supported to become fluent and confident readers. Visits from authors, class reading corners, a well-stocked library and reading ambassadors promote excitement about reading for pleasure. Pupils get ample opportunities to apply their reading skills across the curriculum with great success.

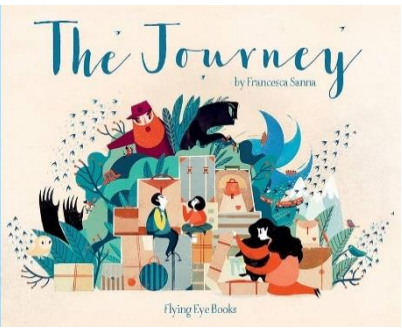
World Book Day

Thank to you all the reading ambassadors for their amazing work. We wouldn't have been able to manage without them. They arrived early to set up the reading café, handed out biscuits and managed the extremely busy book swap. They also chatted to everyone about reading and asked them questions about their books.

The inaugural WBD Scavenger Hunt, designed by Isla and Diego, was a huge success. Ably assisted by Innaya and Zarah, they made sure the Year 3 and 4 teams had a fantastic time. Not forgetting to mention to the winners of the scavenger hunt... 4E and 3G. A big congratulations to them.

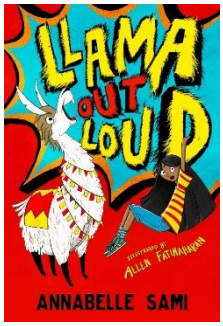






Each year group had a different picture book to inspire some lovely activities throughout the day. There were many more fun games going on in class, including a quiz and cosy reading, and the highlight was the parade in the playground where everyone walked around to show off their costumes. We must say, some of them were fabulous!

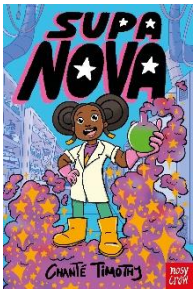
There was still time for an author visit with Annabelle Sami in the afternoon. She told us about her three different series of books for children which she has written. She is a very talented writer whose career is just beginning and we were very lucky to have her come to our school. She is currently writing a new book for adults that you might like to read in the future. To find out about more of her work, go to her website.



More Author Visits

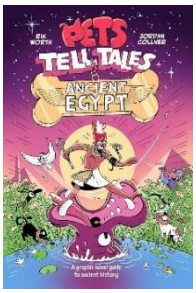
This is the shortest term of the year but we have packed in a wide array of author visits!

The first author that visited us this term was Sathnam Sanghera with his books Stolen History and Journeys of Empire. They are about British history... but I won't spoil it, you can read them yourself. He gave an assembly that had an interactive quiz with the chance to win chocolate! He also talked a bit about his life and how he came to be a writer, including showing us his report card where he got a very low score in English. He went on to do an English degree at Cambridge though and now he's a journalist and author so it's never too late! Emilia 6DS

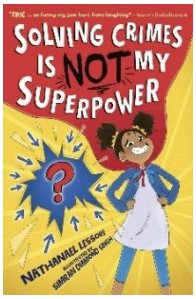


Year 3 had a virtual visit with Chanté Timothy. Nova wants to be a scientist like her parents and she invents a plastic-eating monster called Chomp. We learnt how to draw it and added speech bubbles showing what it might be thinking as well as some extra details – I added a jet pack and some extra eyes! We also thought about what kind of noise it might make if it went in a secret tunnel to a secret lab. Owen 3R

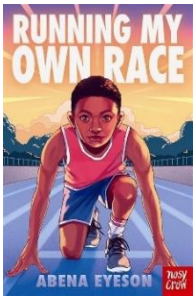
During the past week, we have had three online author visits for the Spark! Book Awards.



Rik Worth (author) and Jordan Collver (illustrator) talked to us about their comic called *Pets Tell Tales: Ancient Egypt*. They explained how they got to know each other at the university comic book society and how they enjoy working together. At the end, Jordan did a live demo of how he draws the characters in the book. Alan 6H



Nathanael Lessore was really funny and I enjoyed it when he talked about all the superpowers he has invented. My favourite was teleporting because it would make it so much easier to get places without a long journey. He told us lots about his book, *Solving Crimes is NOT My Superpower*, which made me really want to read more. Tori 4H



Abena Eyeson wrote *Running My Own Race*. I enjoyed listening to her read the first few pages and now I'm really looking forward to reading it myself. It was great to be hear her answers to our questions. Discovering how authors design their books is inspiring. Mia 5XM

Enter our “Picture a Page” competition...

Our Picture a Page competition has been created by Emilia and Gantisha. It is a fun, interactive and friendly way to express all your artistic talents. First find a page of a book you love. It could be a comic book or a chapter book, picture or non-fiction. In fact it could be any book!

Choose your favourite page. Then you can:

- create your own version of a page from a comic book or illustration in a picture book

  or

- use the words to create pictures or sketches to show what happens. Imagine the scene yourself or share the book with a friend and see what you can come up with together.

The judges are three reading ambassadors: Gantisha, Emilia and Isla. They will be awarding up to 10 marks in each of four categories: creativity, accuracy, technique and effort. The prize will be a book token and a fancy pencil!

The competition starts this Friday and ends on April the 20th. Remember to write your name (s) and the name of the book it’s based on somewhere on the paper. There will be a box near the office to hand in your entries or you can give it to your teacher. The two winners - one from years 3 and 4 and one from years 5 and 6 – will be announced in the assemblies at the end of that week.

...or write a review for the chance to get a prize

During our end of term assembly, the reading ambassadors showed everyone how to log into the school library system. Why not give it a try (if you need help, the instructions are here)? Add a review of your favourite reads and you could win a prize!

Please encourage kids to get involved in these competitions as they are great fun and there are often very few applicants who enter. It would be lovely to see lots of people joining in.

Libraries Online

Have you discovered BorrowBox or Libby?

We no longer subscribe to Sora at school but these are apps that allow you to read an even wider selection of books available at the library for free.

If you haven't tried them yet, follow these four steps:

- Join your local library
- Download the app on your device:
- Sign in with your library card details
- Start reading!

Now just 2 more things to remind you about...

Blue Peter Book Badges

You might have heard of them. They are part of the Blue Peter TV show that has been running for over 65 years (holding the record for longest running kids show). In assembly today, we went over what they are and how to get them.

- They are free - all you need is your own BBC child account.
- Anyone aged 5-15 can apply
- Tell them about a book you've enjoyed reading recently
- Draw a character or scene from the book.

So, what are you waiting for? It is very simple, all the instructions are on the website. Please encourage children to apply as it is not only cool but also gets them into places for free.

Book Swap

There is a book swap bookcase just next to the office that is rarely used but, as we saw on World Book Day, many children were excited to discover it. Anyone can take any book to keep at home for free, including some of the many, many brand new books that have been donated. It's that simple. You don't need to bring a book to swap but if you have any unwanted favourites hanging around at home you could leave them in the box by the bookcase. Thank you!

National Year of Reading 2026 - Go All In

Everyone knows reading expands worlds, sharpens minds, and fuels creativity. But fewer of us are making time for it. Reading doesn't just mean books. It includes stories, ideas and information in print, digital and audio – from graphic novels and lyrics, to articles, podcasts and games. There is lots of inspiration on the National Year of Reading website. Why not find something you enjoy and see where it takes you?

Finally, we would like to say a big thank you to Mrs Jones who has been working tirelessly in the background - so thank you Mrs Jones for making this term such a wonderful experience.

We hope you have a great Easter holidays and come back ready to read even more.

Yours sincerely,

The Reading Ambassadors

If you are looking for more inspiration, BooksForTopics has a National Year of Reading Booklist. The UK Literacy Association has just published its awards shortlists. The LoveReading4Kids website has also got a great list or you can scroll through their Books of the Month. You get 10% off any books you buy from them while they contribute 25% for our school to fill our classroom shelves.