

NRCQ 2024: Student reporter pack

We want the Quiz to be something the whole school can get involved with, building a buzz in the community and sense of pride in the students taking part. Reading should be celebrated and championed – and what better way to do that than getting behind the young people representing your school at a national level!

To help engage older pupils, we've created a student reporter pack to encourage write ups for local children's school website, blog, and newsletter or even with the local newspaper.

This is a succinct toolkit of what makes a good story, key elements of news writing, sample questions to ask interviewees, and how to run a live blog. It will help them learn how to write a report for their school newsletter or paper and develop their understanding of real news and how to report on issues that matter to them.

We would love for you to give this section to librarians or teachers and their pupils. We want to see their National Reading Champions Quiz report, so please encourage them to take a photo and tag us #NRCQuiz2024. This is a great way to empower and encourage positive literacy behaviours in school students.

What makes a good story?

A news story should always focus on the 'human interest' and why people would want to read it. You will want to think about your audience and the relevance of what you are writing. This could be parents or school friends, who read your school newsletter, or wider families and people, who buy their local newspaper. Some questions to think about are 'what is my audience interested in?' and 'does my story fit into this?' If you show how you have thought about their needs, the publication is more likely to publish it.

Once you have found the subject, think about the 5 Ws as these will get to the heart of the story and help structure your first sentence:

1. **What** happened?
2. **Who** was involved?
3. **Where** did it take place?
4. **When** did it happen?
5. **Why** did it happen?
6. And... **How**?



You will want to consider the news values of accuracy and fairness when putting the report together. We suggest using quotes and numerical data, like the number of pupils taking part, to evidence your points. Give different people the same treatment or space in the story.

Choosing interviewees

Interviews add colour and emotion to stories, and can be carried out face-to-face or by phone. Every interviewee serves a purpose or represents a different opinion or angle.

For your school newsletter, we would suggest speaking to a librarian, teacher, participating pupil, and a National Literacy Trust spokesperson. By gathering quotes from these individuals, you will have represented the charity, and given an insight into the pupils, teachers and librarian's perspective.

Suggested questions

For pupils

- What have you enjoyed most about taking part in the National Reading Champions Quiz?
- What kept you calm in the pressure of the regional heats?
- What was your favourite quiz round and why?
- How did your school or class work together as a team?
- How do you feel the experience has boosted your literacy?
- What have you learned about the importance of copyright?

For librarians or teachers

- What was your favourite moment of the National Reading Champions Quiz – in terms of preparation and the heats?
- What have you learned from the experience?
- How was your knowledge of copyright before the quiz, compared to now?
- In your opinion, what is the books and authors in society?

Top tip: Plan your questions ahead of the interview and really listen to their answers as it will encourage them to speak. If possible, try using a reliable recording kit or phone.

Pictures

In order to boost engagement with your story, we would suggest taking photographs of students involved in the quiz. We understand that imagery of children involvement sets a great example and encourages reading for pleasure. You might want to take screenshots of the team smiling with their quiz sheets, filling them out and librarians or teachers working with them.

Remember to make sure you have permissions when taking and sharing photographs. Speak to your librarians or teachers for advice.

Top-tip: When taking or choosing a photograph, think about the emotion or story you want to convey. This might be a sense of pride, happiness or inspiration. The best pictures are ones which make the viewer feel something!

How to run a live blog

To promote and share the regional heats in an exciting, creative way, we would suggest running a live blog. They are perfect for competitions, keeping scores, commentating on the quiz rounds in real-time and engage with your social media following.

1. Find an online platform to host the live blog, e.g Wordpress. If you are using this site, add a live blog plug in so you can use their tools for creating engaging live coverage:
<https://wordpress.org/plugins/24liveblog/>.
2. Create an account on Wordpress
3. Create a 'live blog' event
4. Create a blog post which summaries the live blog's content and aims
5. Install and activate the 'live blog' plugin
6. Publish your blog post and you are ready to go live
7. Alternatively, use your Facebook page