



EDUCATION LIBRARY SERVICE

In this edition you will find our latest selection of free learning resources, including details of author events, links to virtual school trips and information about staying safe online. Although ELS remains closed, staff can still be contacted via email – educationlibraryservice@cheshiresharedservices.gov.uk – to answer queries and provide advice on all aspects of library or reading provision. You can also follow us on Twitter @[CheshireELS](https://twitter.com/CheshireELS) where we'll be sharing news and resources, delivering online [#ELSStoryTime](https://twitter.com/ELSStoryTime) and craft sessions and setting our own [#homelibrary](https://twitter.com/homelibrary) challenges!



Empathy Day is a celebration of a vital life skill. Schools can use Empathy Day to help children and families understand and experience the importance of empathy. The day emphasises the power of stories to build real-life empathy and features a wonderful range of books and authors.

Families and schools can access free resources, including a new Family Activities Pack, plus activities for schools to use in home learning provision by emailing primary@empathylab.uk. For more information, visit the Empathy Day [website](https://www.empathylab.uk) or follow on Twitter [@EmpathyLabUK](https://twitter.com/EmpathyLabUK).

Does your school subscribe to Reading Cloud? Capita will be running a free User Group Webinar for primary school users on Thursday May 21st from 9.30am to 10.30am.

All webinar attendees will receive a certificate of participation and learning for their professional development folder. Further details and booking information can be found on the [ELS website](https://www.els.gov.uk).



Online resources to support children at home and at school



PhonicsPlay are now offering free access to their [website](https://www.phonicsplay.co.uk). Children can practise their blending skills with fun, interactive games while teachers and parents can access lesson plans and further help.



Families and teachers can access over 330 KS1 ebooks (Band Pink to Turquoise) from Big Cat's [primary reading programme](https://www.collinsbigcat.com). Further Collins [learning resources](https://www.collinsbigcat.com) are also available.



[Bring the Noise](https://www.bbc.com/primary/bring-the-noise), part of the BBC'S excellent collection of primary school resources, has a new musical activity to help children [celebrate VE Day](https://www.bbc.com/primary/bring-the-noise).



Get free access to thousands of fiction and information ebooks courtesy of Renaissance's [MyOn](https://www.myon.com) literacy platform. Includes graphic novels, picture books and fairy tales.



Author readings, workshops and podcasts



Michael Morpurgo will be discussing his award-winning children's books at the Big Book Weekend virtual festival (8th-10th May). Check out the programme [here](#).



Join **Michelle Obama** for [#MondaysWithMichelle](#). Each week, the former First Lady reads a different picture book. Past editions have included [The Gruffalo](#) by Julia Donaldson and Axel Scheffler.



On **Tuesday 5th May** at 10am, **Tom Palmer** will be hosting a live chat on his [Facebook page](#). Tom is also posting daily videos on [YouTube](#).



Jasbinder Bilan, who won the Costa Children's Book Award for her novel *Asha and the Spirit Bird*, has created a mini-series of write-along [videos](#) to inspire young writers. Ideal for KS2 students.



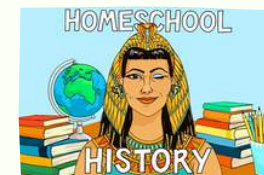
Andy Stanton, author of the Mr Gum series, co-hosts this delightfully daft family [podcast](#) in which questions such as: 'Why is the grass green?' are answered. Sort of.



Stuck at Home is a new daily podcast from [Fun Kids](#). Expect celebrity interviews (*Alex Rider* author Anthony Horowitz was a recent guest!), games, jokes and fascinating facts.



"Welcome to **Football School**, where every lesson is about FOOTBALL!" New [videos](#) released weekly for [#FootballSchoolFriday](#).



Funny and factual, this new podcast, presented by Horrible Histories' **Greg Jenner**, contains entertaining history lessons for the entire family. Listen [here](#).

For an updated schedule of events visit:

<https://www.booktrust.org.uk/books-and-reading/have-some-fun/fun-at-home-with-authors-and-illustrators/>



Virtual school trips (packed lunch optional)

The days of counting children on and off the coach may be on hold for the moment, but children can still experience a little of what school trips can offer with these fantastic online resources (links below). For more virtual trips and online collections visit: <https://mcn.edu/a-guide-to-virtual-museum-resources/>



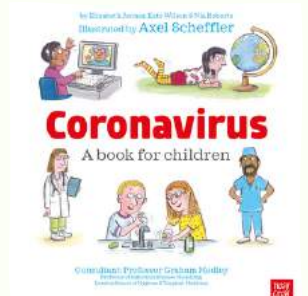
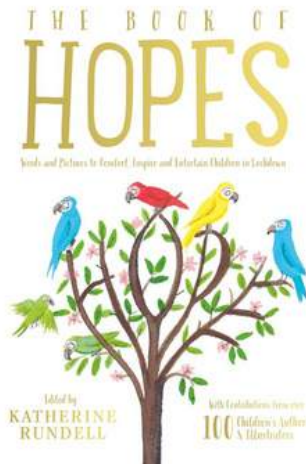
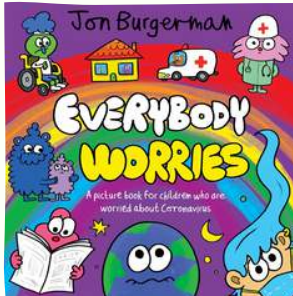
Field trip to space?!
Might as well!

Since the lockdown, museums, galleries and other cultural organisations have been adding a host of fantastic new learning resources to their websites and social media. Follow the hashtag [#MuseumFromHome](#) on Twitter to see the weird and wonderful collections that museums from across the world have been sharing.



Staying informed

These free e-books (links below) discuss the coronavirus in a sensitive and age-appropriate way, offering practical advice and reassurance to young children. *The Book of Hopes*, meanwhile, is a collection of over 100 short stories, poems, essays and pictures intended to comfort, inspire, distract and entertain children during the lockdown.



'**Caring for Each Other**', Sesame Street's new initiative, includes a series of bright and breezy videos on hand washing, healthy eating, and how to cope when missing friends and family. As well as games and colouring sheets, there are also helpful resources for families and teachers, including self-care tips for parents and carers.



For older children, **Newsround** has a growing archive of coronavirus-related reports, suggestions for lockdown activities and advice on 'how to BOSS being stuck at home!'



Free digital edition of the weekly newspaper. Pitched at children age 7-14, it 'aims to get kids talking about the news in an easy to understand and non-threatening way.' Schools can also access free learning resources.



Access free editions of the current affairs magazine for children aged between 8 and 14. Visit the Activity Hub for tips on den building, cooking and keeping fit.



Staying safe online

The Department for Education has issued guidelines to help schools and teachers support pupils' education at home during the coronavirus outbreak. It includes links to sites such as Thinkuknow, a UK organisation which protects children both online and offline, and Net Aware, the NSPCC's guide to social networks, apps and games. For children who have their own mobile phone or use the internet independently, the BBC's Own It website covers information literacy, peer pressure and online safety in a fun and engaging manner. The Own It app aims to help children and young people 'make smart choices, feel more confident and get advice when you need it'. If you're feeling overwhelmed by the amount of (fake) news available online, take a look at the National Literacy Trust's Newswise at Home page. As well as a family activity pack, it has links to a range of resources, including child-friendly news sites.



Useful websites

For more useful links, please see our [previous newsletters](#) and the [ELS website](#).

All Digital School: <https://alldigitalschool.com/>

Set up in response to COVID-19, this extensive database collates online learning resources, lesson plans and educational technology from across the world.

Bonnier Books: <https://www.bonnierbooks.co.uk/news/teachingresources/>

Free teaching resources, activities and book extracts. Includes activity sheets on mindfulness for KS1 and KS2.

Dolly Parton's Imagination Library: <https://imaginationlibrary.com/goodnight-with-dolly/>

Comforting and topical bedtime stories read by the legendary Dolly Parton.

Driver Youth Trust for Literacy: <https://www.driveryouthtrust.com/at-home-activities/>

Activity pack for home learning including tasks to improve reading comprehension, vocabulary and writing skills.

Education Endowment Foundation: <https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/covid-19-resources/>

Home learning tools and frameworks for schools, as well as resources to share with parents.

Letters and Sounds: <https://www.wandleenglishhub.org.uk/lettersandsounds>

Daily online phonics lessons for reception and Year 1.

Literacy Counts: <https://literacycounts.co.uk/free-home-learning/>

Free downloadable learning packs (reception to Year 6) from literacy consultants, Literacy Counts.

National Geographic Kids: <https://www.natgeokids.com/uk/>

Animal-related activities, games and trivia that are both entertaining and educational.

National Shelf Service: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCPUlqIJM0aieXdq-LxKDvWA>

Daily book recommendations for children and young people from librarians across the UK.

Premier League Primary Stars: <https://plprimarystars.com/home-learning>

Football-themed activities, physical challenges and curriculum-based resources.

Reading Zone (Children's Zone): <https://readingzone.com/index.php?zone=cz>

Children can discover the latest books, play games and read up on their favourite authors.

STEM Learning: <https://www.stem.org.uk/home-learning>

A range of free STEM-related activities, including simple challenges to complete at home.

Words for Life: <http://www.wordsforlife.org.uk/>

For parents to help their children develop vital communication and literacy skills from birth to age eleven.

