

South West Reading Passport 2012 Summary of key points for SWACL

From full report produced by Literature Works - also available for your information. Also from evaluative discussion by Read South West.

Statistics

General

- 'Inspired by' status achieved, and project/south west libraries mentioned in several pieces of national and regional promotional material from London 2012, including the official commemorative book (p277)
- 15 Library Services and two regional agencies and one regional network body took part
- 12986 people took up the challenge of the Reading Passport
- 2595 reviews were produced and handed in to the libraries for use in promotion of reading
- The total cash cost of the project was in the region of £6050

About participants

- 47% of people who took a passport thought the project was brilliant
- 45% of people who took a passport thought the project was excellent
- 6% of people who took a passport thought it was OK
- An average of less than 3% of participants returned an evaluation sheet*
- An average of 20% of all participants returned written reviews
- 82% of those who expressed an opinion agreed they had read something entirely new or outside their comfort zone
- 90% of those who expressed an opinion said they had learned something new on their reading journey
- 85% of participants were female
- 12% of participants had some form of disability

*3% was deemed not untypical by Literature Works

Outcomes

Using Generic Learning Outcomes to assess what people said they had learned by participating resulted in the following:

- 98 people increased their **knowledge and understanding** – for example
 - “That the Ancient Greeks started the Olympics”
 - “I learned that by reading books from other countries you can learn to appreciate other cultures, their richness, even without going to that country”
 - “That if you hear a Lion roar in the African bush it isn't hunting and therefore you are probably safe”
 - “The diversity of African culture and how women could even be independent in the 1950s in Europe”

- 12 people changed their **attitudes and values** – for example
 - “It taught me to be more open minded when choosing my books”
 - “That a transvestite is not necessarily gay!”
- 16 people had **enjoyment, inspiration, creativity** – for example
 - “How to enjoy a wet summer with my leg in plaster – 5 great books all very different”
 - “Usually I give up if I don’t like the first few pages but enjoyed one like that”
 - “Too much to tell, new authors, cultures and experiences”
- 33 people experienced **activity, behaviour, progression** – for example
 - “My reading has been lifted out of its rut!”
 - “To be more adventurous when choosing books to pick titles I wouldn’t normally consider”
 - “How to be a more ‘optimistic’ reader – rather than staying in my comfort zone as there is so much to experience through the written word”
 - “I learned not to be so conservative in my choice of books and gained an insight into different cultures”
 - “I needed a shake-up! Good to try books other than history or crime”

Reflections from Read South West

- Many more people took books from displays, took reading lists (where offered to give away) and participated than actually took passports/returned forms – in 2013 would need to think about how to capture this in evaluation
- We printed lots of book review forms, we would have been better to print lots of reading lists
- Cannot prove increase in issues, but perception that it had impact
- Participation numbers may look low – we printed too many passports – but this was a learning opportunity
- Targets were aimed at what LOCOG wanted, then Grants for Arts, then what could be achieved, but in 2013 we can be more focussed on our own needs: issues, readers, membership and demonstrable outcomes
- Timescales too short to build on Summer Reading Challenge promotional work, and no real lead in for staff to do more than minimal promotion – and not many new members identified as a result of this project
- Project designed to be light on staff time (could work in non staffed libraries) and this worked
- FE colleges expressed interest, but it was difficult to draw them into the project due to dates – a missed opportunity but one to build on for 2013
- Broadly, the format and approach worked – minor details such as print size, and whether review sheets should be separate to be reviewed

Read South West would like to run a similar project in 2013, with clear targets for extending reading choices, increased borrowing, and gaining new members as well as again gathering outcome data. This is reflected in the draft action plan for SWACL approval.