



If you're into nature, read into it!

GO ALL IN.

National
Year of
Reading
2026

Resources and ideas for reading into nature and the environment.

This guide has been developed as part of the National Year of Reading, for volunteers and community groups to bring reading and literacy into outdoor spaces. Starting with a shared connection to the natural world, these activities use reading, storytelling, creativity and conversation to deepen engagement and spark connection.

Whether you're running a one-off activity or building something longer-term, this guide includes simple, flexible ideas that are easy to adapt.

Powered by

**National
Literacy
Trust**

Change your story

Creating a reading space

A reading space can be a quiet area for your community to disconnect from devices; a social space for connecting; or a setting for activities that encourage people to get out and explore.

1. Lending libraries and book swap boxes

- Run a book drive to collect book donations through local schools, social media and community networks.
- Focus on quality. Ask people to donate only what they would be happy to receive.
- Include diverse and relevant reading material that reflects the local community and includes different formats (e.g. newspapers, magazines and podcasts).
- Signpost to your local public library and their free eBook and audiobook platforms.
- Use the National Year of Reading **branding toolkit** to boost visibility and create simple signage inviting people to take a book, leave a book, or share a recommendation.
- Link to seasonal themes, or key calendar moments like Earth Day, Summer of Sport or Take 10.
- Assign a member of staff or volunteer to be responsible for the space, ensuring it is tidy and up to date.
- Reuse worn or damaged books in activities like zine making or crafts.

Additional support

Check local funding opportunities for a small-scale grant to get the space started.

Partner with local groups (e.g. Men's Sheds) to help build or install any shelving you might need!

2. Setting up a 'Story Bench'

Allocate a bench in a green space or community garden for conversation and story sharing, helping to build connections and reduce isolation.

- Make it visible with decoration or a plaque
- Add simple signage or prompts to invite participation and conversation.
- Check with your local council or landowner for permission if it's in a public space.

3. Look for a Book

Hide books in outdoor spaces such as parks or trails for people to discover. Use the National Year of Reading **Look for a Book postcards** to let people know they've found something special.

Tips

- Choose safe, visible spots with good footfall.
- Protect books with waterproof covers (e.g. re-usable plastic wallets).
- Share clues and photos on social media to encourage participation.
- Link to key moments like World Book Day, Summer of Sport or local community events.

Summer of Sport

From June to August, the National Year of Reading is celebrating a 'Summer of Sport,' using the nation's passion for sport to help embed regular reading habits.

- Get inspired by sports themed reading lists and interviews on the [Go All In website](#).
- Use the [Summer of Sport toolkit](#) for ideas, calendar moments, messaging and sporty branding.
- Combine reading with activity through using reading materials as prizes, setting active challenges or creating a story trail.



Tips for creating a story trail:

- Place short story snippets in different locations with clues, questions or tasks at each stop.
- Keep text short and easy to read on the move.
- Include activity-based challenges (e.g. counting steps, jump as high as you can, run on the spot or tasks to find or spot things around them)
- Collaborate with local authors and illustrators
- Remember, story trails don't have to cost a lot of money – they can be as simple as pages printed at home and laminated to weatherproof.
- Alternatively, download the National Year of Reading [Nature Quest booklet](#).



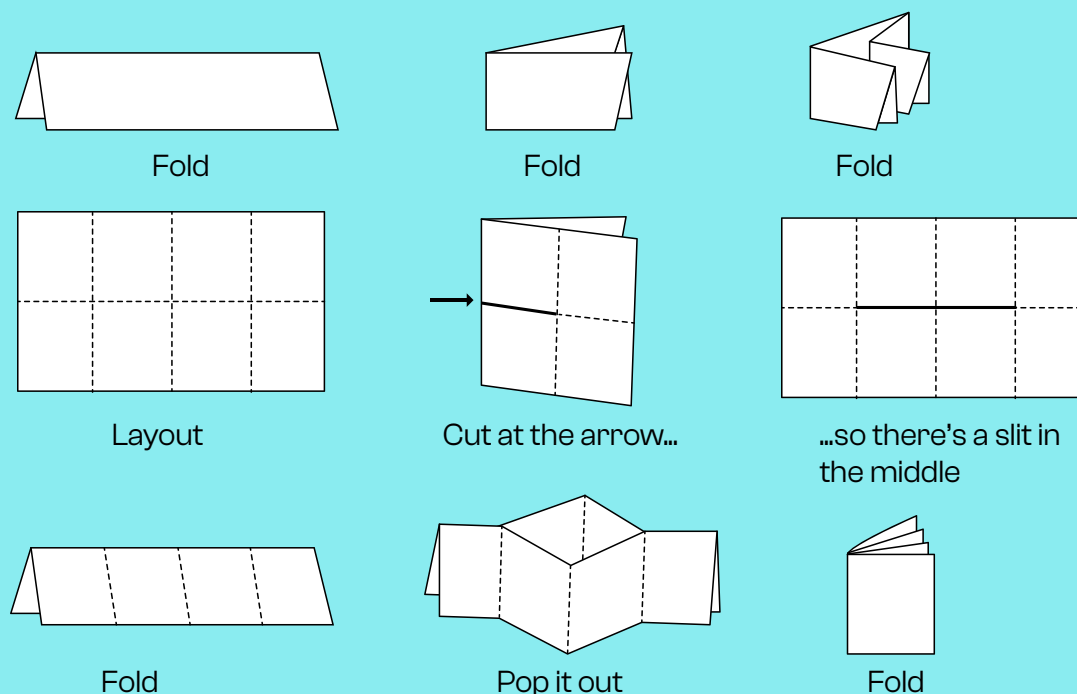
Workshop ideas

1. Zine Making

A zine workshop is a simple, creative way for people of all ages to explore literacy by making small, handmade booklets with words, images and textures.

Tips:

- Use recycled materials such as old books, magazines, and foraged natural items like leaves and pressed flowers.
- Choose a relevant community theme (e.g. wildlife, fashion, future ideas).
- Encourage creativity - there's no right or wrong approach!
- Finished zines can be displayed in your reading space, at events or photocopied for wider distribution, they could even be sold to raise funds for future projects!



2. Posters of protest

Posters are a powerful way for people to express their views on environmental issues through bold, visual communication.

Tips:

- Use handwritten slogans, collage materials and print techniques (e.g. lino printing, cyanotypes or potato printing).
- Keep messages short, clear and impactful.
- Focus on simple, bold shapes.
- Let people respond to issues that matter to them, locally or globally.
- Display posters in your space or as part of a community exhibition.
- Protest posters have a long history, looking at examples in local museums or archives can spark ideas and connect to past movements and community voices.

3. Run a story exchange

Bring people together in a shared space to tell and listen to stories. This could include readings, open mic poetry, or sharing memories across generations.

Tips:

- Choose an accessible space with seating or bring picnic blankets.
- Partner with local groups and promote via social media and community networks.
- Link to local or national calendar events.
- Connect with your local public library for support and connections to storytellers.
- Use simple prompts to spark conversation (e.g. what is your favourite story from childhood? which book character would you invite to dinner and why?)

 goallin.org.uk

 [go_all_in_2026](https://www.instagram.com/go_all_in_2026)

Tag us using **#GoAllIn2026** and **#NationalYearOfReading2026**

