



# Assembly Notes

It takes time to put together an assembly. So here are some guidelines to help make **Readathon** really easy for you to introduce to children.

## Dates and timing

It's entirely up to you when, and for how long, you run **Readathon**. Once you've decided, display the posters and explain **Readathon**. You could play the DVD in assembly (run time under eight minutes). Make sure pupils know they can choose what to read. Let them know how long they have to complete their reading and to collect their sponsor money. Consider creating reading trees, reading chains and other ways to make reading even more fun (you'll find more information in your pack).

## The Readathon Code

It's important for all **Readathon** readers to stay safe. We advise that pupils only ask friends and relatives to sponsor them. Please tell them not to approach strangers or knock on doors. Explain that sponsors don't need to live near – phoning grandparents and other relatives can be productive! Remind pupils that the more sponsors they get the more money will go to help children with serious illnesses. Explain that, provided their sponsors fill in the form correctly, we can claim Gift Aid back from the government, turning every £1 sponsored into £1.25. Also let them know that the school will get a voucher to the value of 20 per cent of total sponsorship raised, to buy new books (or that they will be given to children in hospital, if you have chosen this option).

## How and who the pupils are helping

In our 27 years' experience, we've learned that children love the sponsorship element of **Readathon** – it gives them a great sense of pride and purpose on top of the enjoyment of reading. In particular, they like to help other children.

**Readathon** collects schools' sponsorship money and uses it in some amazing ways:

- We have launched an initiative called **ReadWell**, which provides books and storytelling to children in hospital.
- We share most of the funds raised between two incredible children's charities: **CLIC Sargent**, which provides vital support to children and young people with cancer, and their families; and **Roald Dahl's Marvellous Children's Charity** which helps seriously ill and disabled children.
- We provide free books for schools - a resource needed now more than ever.

**Readathon** money is not spent on research, and certainly not on animal experiments. It all goes to help children who are very ill with cancer, leukaemia and other blood disorders, epilepsy or acquired brain injury. **Readathon** money helps children and teenagers going through the long process of treatment. It helps mums and dads with homehelp, transport to visit hospital, household costs, wheelchairs, special holidays, special nurses, special social workers, in fact anything that will help get a very ill child better.

For more resources or advice contact us at [reading@readathon.org](mailto:reading@readathon.org) or on 0870 24 01124. We are happy to help.

## Explaining illnesses

It's important that children do not worry about catching illnesses. People can't catch these sorts of illnesses - it's just bad luck. Treatment can be very long and unpleasant, often involving many and/or long stays in hospital - but with help from charities like these, most young people fully recover, or at least get significantly better, and go on to live normal lives.

## Reading for good

Very importantly, please remind pupils about the pleasure of reading 'because they want to'. Reading can give them incredible enjoyment and understanding, but also creates a positive ripple effect through their whole lives.