



Readathon®

Reading for life!

READATHON ASSEMBLY NOTES

These notes are designed to help any teacher wishing to introduce the topic of Readathon into a school assembly.

Dates and Timing

Having decided the dates for your school's Readathon (please note there are no fixed dates for Readathon – schools can organise the event to suit their timetable and the size and nature of the school) tell pupils how long they have to do the reading and to collect their sponsor money.

The Readathon Code

we think it's important that children ask only friends and relatives for sponsorship money. Tell them not to approach strangers or knock on doors. Remind them however that their grandparents are often keen to help - a phone call to them can be productive!

Children who raise a lot for Readathon usually do it, not by trying to read an excessive number of books, but by getting plenty of sponsors.

Where the money will go

Readathon money is not spent on medical 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.

It is not difficult to explain cancer, simply, to children. Here are some pointers if you want to do it.

Firstly, although cancer and leukaemia are comparatively common in children and teenagers **MOST YOUNG PEOPLE WHO GET CANCER RECOVER AND GO ON TO LEAD NORMAL ADULT LIVES.**

Cancer is not 'caught' from someone who has it. It's just a misfortune when a child develops cancer. All that happens is that the smallest particles in your body - called cells start to go wrong. They get out of control. This happens in two main ways. The out of control cells may form a nasty lump, called a tumour, or the cells that go wrong get into your whole bloodstream and bones, this is called leukaemia.

The important thing know about cancer in children and teenagers is that the treatment is very long, and unpleasant. To get them better, doctors have to give patients very strong medicines (chemotherapy) or even use radioactivity to kill off the bad cells (radiotherapy). Often a tumour has to be removed by surgery. These treatments themselves make you feel ill. The medicines can be so strong that it makes your hair fall out (it's not the cancer that does this). The hair grows back as you get better, but it's a horrible experience.

Readathon money helps children and teenagers going through this long process. 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, in a human and supportive way, to get a very ill child back on its feet again.

**If you would like more help or advice before tackling
a READATHON ASSEMBLY please contact
the Readathon office on: telephone 0870 240 1124**