

LOVE FOOTBALL: LOVE READING 2

A toolkit for practitioners which uses football to motivate young people to improve their literacy skills.

Tom Palmer





David James
England Goalkeeper

An introduction from England goalkeeper, David James

I have been a Reading Champion for the National Literacy Trust since 2003 and I have seen first-hand how football and footballers can help to show families that there is a purpose for reading in their lives. And that it can bring them pleasure.

Tom, Jim and I have worked together for a long time now, and we know that these ideas work. In fact, many of them come straight from schools and libraries. We have gathered them here in the hope that they will be useful to you.

All the best, David James

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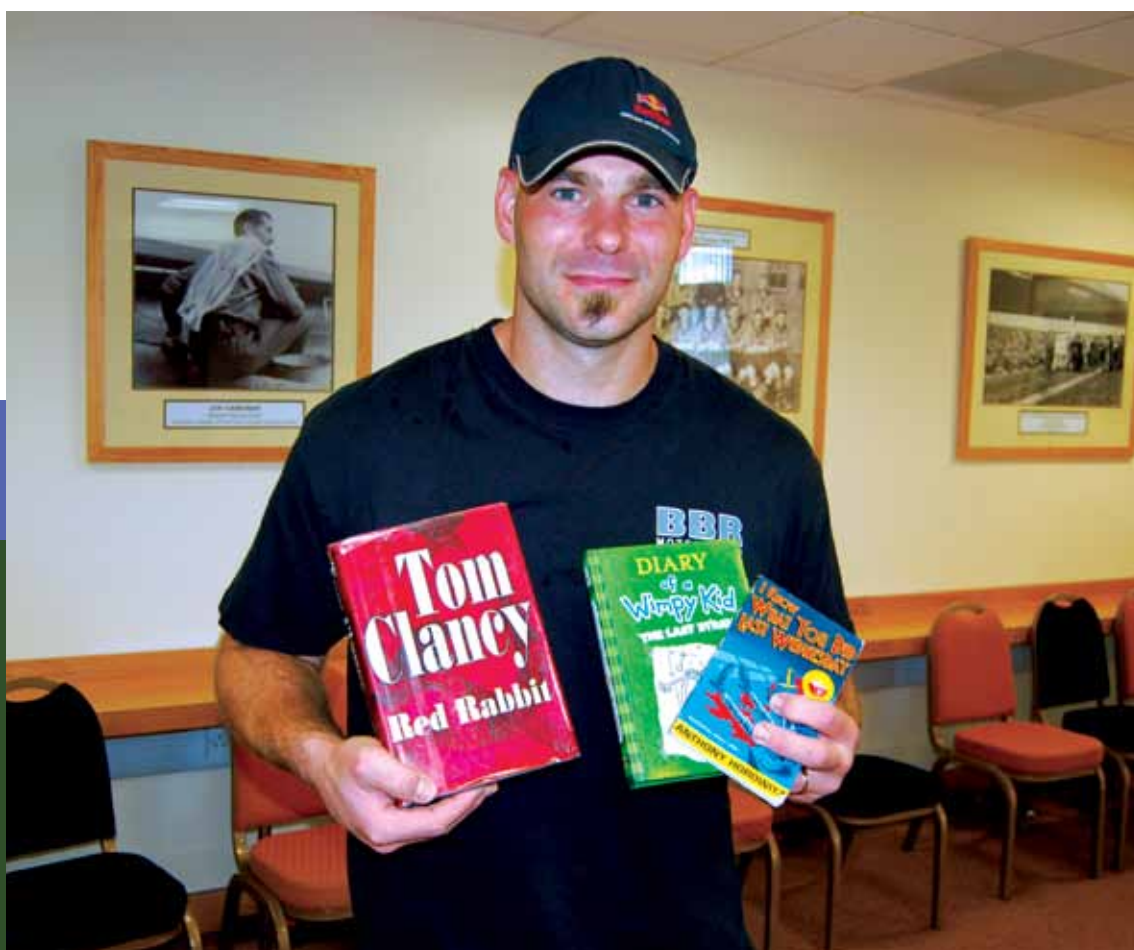
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LOVE FOOTBALL: LOVE READING 2



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INTRODUCTION

Football frenzy

Love it or hate it, football is a huge draw. Advertisers and media companies spend billions using the beautiful game to get their message across. We do not have billions to spend to get our message across, but we do have this toolkit.

Our message is that if you find the right things, whether they are books, magazines, newspapers or websites, you can read them for pleasure.

We know that, if people read for pleasure, they do better at school, their literacy improves and quite often they are happier.

And we know that many children – and families – get pleasure from football.

This toolkit is adapted from the National Literacy Trust's World Cup Toolkit: *LOVE FOOTBALL: LOVE READING*.

Who the toolkit is for

This toolkit is full of great ideas that will encourage reading for pleasure. Some of them need resources and time, some do not. It has been written for Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 3 teachers, school librarians, children's public librarians, Playing for Success centres and reader development workers: for anyone whose role it is to promote literacy.

And, if you are working outside of this age range, perhaps doing some essential work such as involving parents, it will not take much work from you to adapt this content and make it suitable.

Barriers

A lot of people are uncomfortable with football. They do not understand the fuss around it, they feel negative towards it and are, occasionally, intimidated by it. In many ways this is the same as some people's attitude to reading: people who "don't read" often have very negative feelings towards it. They put up barriers. They are intimidated too.

This guide has been written for everyone, football lovers and haters alike. But there is no getting away from the fact that it is harder to deliver the ideas suggested in this guide if you do not know much about football. We would like to make three suggestions to help you overcome this:

1. Put together a small group of football fans from among your students or users to form a football reading committee: they can help you decide how best to promote reading through football.
2. Ask one or more children to be football or sports librarians who can work in the library and help you promote reading through football.
3. Ask a colleague who does like football to join you in the planning; or, failing that, a friend, or the parents of the children you work with.



Men only

Some people think that football is just for boys and that girls will not be interested. But that is not true. A lot of boys hate football. A lot of girls love football. The sport played by most girls in the UK is... football.

Tom Palmer

This toolkit has been written by children's football author, Tom Palmer, who also works as a reader development consultant. Tom was a reluctant reader until he was 17. His mum saw that he hated reading, but loved football, so she used football to get him reading. First newspapers, then magazines, then books. Now he is the author of the *Foul Play* and *Football Academy* series for Puffin. He spends the rest of his time doing what his mum did for him: using football to encourage children to love reading.

- Tom has written several free-to-download classroom read stories to accompany this guide.
 - A five minute story for years 1 to 3.
 - A ten minute story for years 4 to 6.
 - A fifteen minute story for years 7 to 8.
 - Plus a five part (each part being a five minute read) story to read if you choose to have a week of football reading activities. This is aimed more broadly at years 3 to 7.
 - The toolkit is delivered by the National Literacy Trust (NLT) and funded by the Professional Footballers' Association and Football Foundation, with images courtesy of the Football Association and the Premier League.
 - A massive thank you to them; this work would not be possible without this support.
 - Some of the ideas and resources in this toolkit have been supplied by libraries, schools and Playing for Success centres in the UK.
-

It's a team effort!

Extra Time

In addition to this toolkit, we have created a specific section on the National Literacy Trust website to help make this project as up to date as possible. Visit www.literacytrust.org.uk/footballresources for the following additional material:

- Tom Palmer's free downloadable stories.
 - Reviews of recently published football books.
 - Football book covers to download for your displays.
 - Activity and work sheets bringing football and reading together.
 - a lot more...
-



Tom Palmer
Author

DISPLAYS

Having a topical display up in your school or library about football can be a great way of engaging those who love the game and, more importantly, of engaging them with reading. You can use it to entice football fans towards newspapers, magazines and books.

Make it more interesting by creating interactive elements and update it regularly.

Put displays up in more unexpected places: on the wall where children queue for their dinner, in the local sports centre, on toilet walls, on lockers, in changing rooms. Anywhere that you can hijack their attention. And in the school entrance to try to engage the children's parents too.

Using book cover images

Schools and libraries are sometimes reluctant to use cover images from books on posters and displays, conscious that they need permission from the publisher. The general rule is that you can use covers of books to promote reading, so long as you are not using the images to make money. Publishers ask that, if you use one of their book covers, that you use the whole image and do not break it up in any way. We have put some useful football book jackets on www.literacytrust.org.uk/footballresources.

Interactive football wall

Create a display of football images and words that changes weekly. Use images from the week's newspapers and magazines as the basis for the display. You could also use the football book covers from our online football book cover bank. You can encourage children to help with designing and making the football wall and give them the responsibility of being in charge of it for a week or a month.

Make sure your display changes regularly, so the children keep coming back to see more. For instance:

- encourage children to put up their predictions for the weekend's matches, scoring them and awarding prizes the following morning.
- put up the weekend's newspaper reports, drawing the children to reading newspapers (either by buying them in or downloading them from the internet).
- have a "footballer of the month" gauge on the display, offering children one vote each to say who they think is the best player that month.
- Then in front of the display, if it is in a suitable place, you can put out football books and the latest football magazines and newspapers.





Football book prize

If you can afford to buy in some football books, or already have a good selection, you can run a football book prize over a term. There are several ways of doing this.

Keep an array of football books out in the library or classroom. If a child reads a book ask them to give it a score: three points if they love it, one point if it was okay and none if they hated it – just like the points system in football. At the end of the tournament announce the school or library's number one football book.

Or, get children to work out a shortlist of football books from the library stock or ones they have from home. Ask a child to champion each book, to promote it to their classmates. Then have a vote on which is the most popular football book.

You can run a book league too, with books going head to head with each other. There is a spreadsheet on www.literacytrust.org.uk/footballresources that you can use and adapt.

Goal wall

Put up a two-dimensional goal on the wall of your library or classroom using strips of white paper and either real or drawn on netting. Photocopy ball shaped review sheets from the online resource pages, suggest the children read and review books and “shoot” them at the goal. If they liked the book, suggest they put the ball in the back of the net. If they thought it was okay, then maybe have it hit the crossbar. If they hated it, they can pin it high over the bar.

Football book swap

A book swap is a good way of getting children to choose what books they want and recycle books they have finished with. Encourage children to bring used books or magazines to the book swap. You can limit it to football related material or open it up to everything, using sport as a pretext for reading in general.

The Premier League Reading Stars Challenge

The Premier League Reading Stars project has a free poster-based promotion where a class or group is challenged to read 100 books, or, depending on their ability, 100 reading challenges between them. The group gets a giant poster and 100 stickers. Each time one of the children completes a read, a book a sticker gets added to the chart. When the class reaches 100 they can enter for the chance to win a prize. The packs are available from www.premierleaguereadingstars.org.uk. From 2011 we are planning to develop a full PLRS project for schools and libraries, with a highly interactive site, materials and resources including clips of players talking about their reading habits. Keep an eye on the National Literacy Trust site for an opportunity to take part!

Football belly bands

Ask older children in the school to write reviews (or call them “match reports” to avoid literary language) and put them on strips of paper round the book, as part of your display. These are sometimes called belly bands.

Get caught reading football books

Along the lines of Get Caught Reading (see www.getcaughtreading.org.uk) ask staff and older children in your school or library to be photographed reading a football book, magazine or newspaper. The photos can be placed around the school or library in places where a lot of people walk through.

Male Order

Libraries in the East Midlands ran a great promotion called *Male Order*, where they encouraged women who visited libraries to get a book for the men in their family. You could adapt this and target regular users, encouraging them to take out football books for any football fans they know, maybe with a list of other football books available if they wanted more.



ACTIVITIES

A special activity in a library, school library or Playing for Success centre can be a great way to galvanise interest in football reading. These activities can be run as a one off, as a way of kick starting a series of activities or as part of a longer period of activity.

Football library treasure hunt

The football library treasure hunt is an easy to set up activity that will lead children to all the sports related resources in your library, although it may need adapting to fit your library layout.

If you are a school with a small library then you could ask your local or central library if you could run the treasure hunt with them.

Give every child a sheet with six clues. The following questions act as examples:

- Where will you be able to leaf through news about last night's football games?
- Where are the books about football players?
- Where are books on how to improve your football skills?
- Where can you find out news today that has not even been printed in a newspaper yet?
- Where are the histories of the world's great football clubs?
- Where can you find fictional stories about football?

This should, with occasional help, lead children to the following sections: newspapers, biography, children's sport, internet, adult sport, fiction. Bear in mind that some libraries arrange sections differently.

Pin up one of six large letters of the alphabet next to each of the above sections. The six letters should form an anagram of a famous footballer's name. Familiar six letter names you could use could be Torres, Rooney or Drogba. But you may wish to use your own local hero's name. Tell the children to solve the anagram. Find a prize for the winner.

To avoid the cruciate ligament and metatarsal injuries that might occur if you make this a race, it can work well if you say everyone who gets it right within 15 minutes will be entered into a draw to win the prize.

What the football papers say

Newspapers are a great way of getting reluctant readers to talk about what they have read. Get a class of children together. Buy in all the day's newspapers. Tabloids as well as quality. Hand them out to the children. Give them half an hour (or so) to read the sports sections and to talk about them amongst themselves. Then bring the children together to talk about the main issues in the newspapers. Should this goal have been allowed? Was it right that this manager was sacked? Should that player have been sent off?

To get the best out of the event, choose the day of or after a really big game. Interest will be greater.



Football reading quiz

A variation on the above is to get in a lot of football books, magazines and newspapers (possibly asking children to bring in anything they have from home) and to base a quiz on the content of all that material. Develop 20 questions to ask from facts that are in all the material. Give the class 30 to 60 minutes to learn as much as they can. Use the internet too, if you can get access to enough terminals.

Then put the children in teams. Ask the 20 questions.

You will need a prize for the winner.

Commentator X Factor

Record highlights of a key football game. Challenge children to a commentary competition. Give them two to five minutes of a game to commentate on, showing it with the sound off. Set up a panel to judge the commentating, like X Factor.

This can work well if you prepare the children. They can be encouraged to do reading research on the teams and players, like real radio and TV commentators have to do. Direct them towards websites, books, newspapers and magazines that they can use to have the best and most up to date facts. You might like to give them a list of key commentator words or phrases; it might also help to play them an example clip, with the sound on, first!

The Football Reading Game

The Football Reading Game is a game of two halves! It is the event Tom Palmer devised for schools and uses as part of the Premier League Reading Stars scheme.

The first half is a quiz about football reading, the second half is a penalty shoot out. The children accumulate points in teams, or as individuals, as the quiz progresses; in the second half, the children take penalties, one shot for each point they got in the quiz. The winner gets a prize.

Round one: Black out words from football newspaper headlines and ask the children to guess the missing words. Before you start, ask the children what they like reading about in newspapers.

Round two: Magazines: again, get the children to say what magazines they enjoy, encourage them to tell the classmates about what is in those magazines. Show them the covers of football magazines like *Match*, *Kick*, *Match of the Day*, *FourFourTwo* and *World Soccer*, then ask them questions like: Why is *FourFourTwo* called *FourFourTwo*?

(Because it is a team formation.) What are the special magazines that football clubs sell before games called? (Programmes.) Who is the player on the front of a magazine?

Round three: Books: get the children to talk about books they like to read. Then show them the covers of football books, blacking out key words like players' names, and ask them questions about the books. Who is this on the cover of his autobiography? Which football team is this book about?

Read a section from a football story then ask the children questions about the bit you read out.

You can have the children doing the quiz solo or in teams. With a group of up to 30 children teams of four work well. With any larger groups ask all the children the question, then choose the first hand up to answer.

If you are a school and have a hall with a five-a-side goal in it, or a field outside, then that is an ideal place for the shoot out. In libraries you can also use collapsible five-a-side goals borrowed from a sports centre. Failing that, a couple of chairs work as goal posts.

Indoor football is usually best with sponge balls.

Library visit

Take the children to visit a public library. Get them to join on the day if they are not already members; visiting a library can help overcome preconceptions children may have about going, or fears that they do not belong in one.

Bookshop visit

Take the children to visit a bookshop. If you can find some money from somewhere, maybe a local sponsor or some other funding, offer to buy them all a book. Like libraries, a visit to a bookshop can help get children used to bookshops and feel like they are places they could visit in the future.

Playing for Success centres

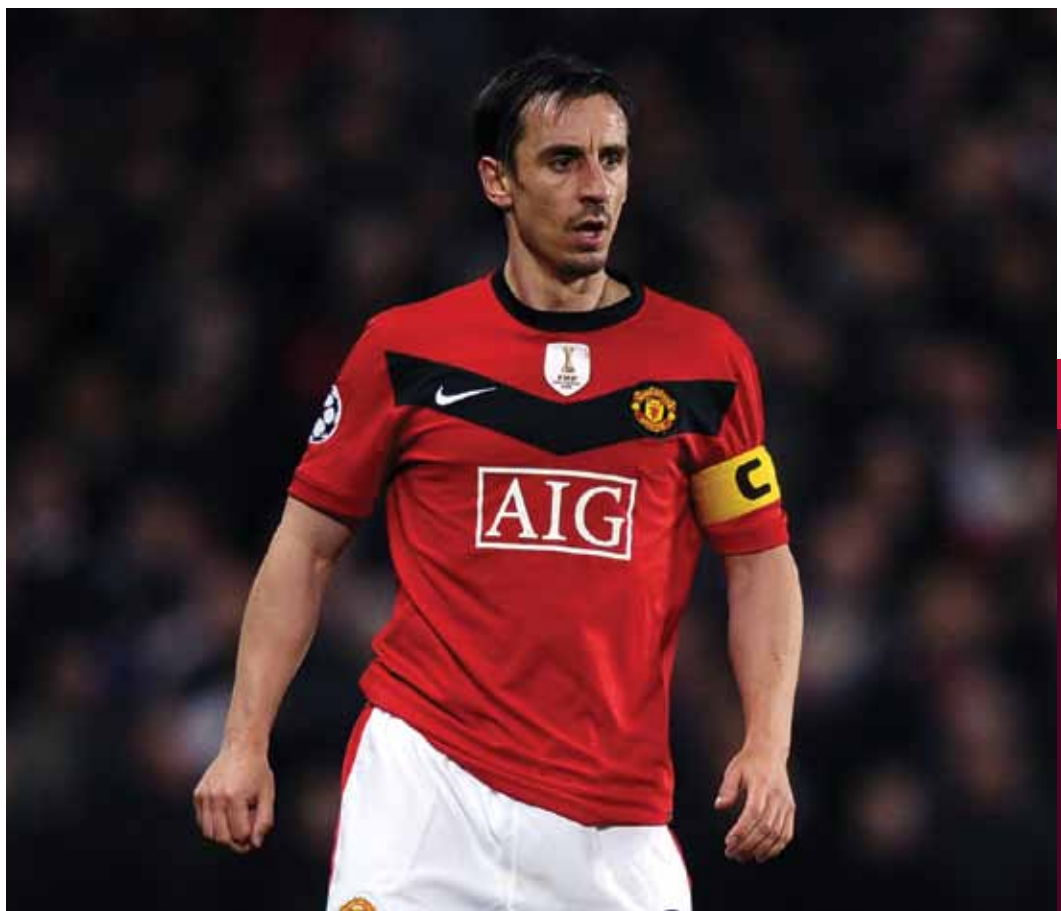
Visit a local football club's Playing for Success centre. Playing for Success centres run classes to boost children's literacy and numeracy, using football as a motivation. They often invite schools in from their locality. Visit your local club's website or telephone their switchboard to find out the best contact, or look at www.playingforsuccessonline.org.uk.

Football training +

Invite children to an after-school football training session and add in some of the football literacy activities above.

Reading the Game movie

Watch the Reading the Game film, which features footballers talking about reading. It is available online at www.literacytrust.org.uk/Football/index.html.



GAMES

The following easy-to-plan games can be used in classrooms and libraries as stand-alone activities to do with football, or as techniques to warm groups of children up for some of the more substantial activities described later in this toolkit.

Have I Got Football News For You

Buy the morning's newspapers, choosing the day of or after a big game. Go through the headlines and black out key words. Then host a *Have I Got News for You* style session. Read out the headlines without the missing word. Ask the children, either on their own or in teams, to guess the missing words. Once someone has the right answer, get the group to talk about the game the headline refers to, or read them the article.

Warn the children they will be doing this exercise. Suggest they go to the school library or come into the classroom early to read the morning's newspapers. Encourage their parents to read about football in newspapers with their children.

Football bingo

Create a set of bingo cards with the names of topical football players, teams, football authors and other such things. For example:

Torres	Helena Pielichaty	Liverpool
Bali Rai	West Ham United	Off side
Leeds United	Goal	Rooney

Then read out from a master list of words, like a game of bingo, giving small prizes for the children getting the first line and the first full house.

Football fact finder

Buy a few packs of the collectable football players stickers or cards that will be in every newsagents and supermarket during the football season. Hand them out at random, one per child. Give the children either in teams or solo half-an-hour to find out, online, as much as they can about the player. Give them direction as to what facts you are after. Or leave it open. Give a small prize to the best presentation at the end.

A variation on this is to give each child or group one of the countries a player is from and asking them to find out about it.

Football word searches

See www.literacytrust.org.uk/footballresources for football word searches. They have been designed to highlight things to read about football.

Football crosswords

See www.literacytrust.org.uk/footballresources for football crosswords. They have been designed to highlight things to read about football.

Design a poster

Have a competition to design a poster that will promote the library's football stock and activities through schools. This will raise awareness of the library among all those who take part and those who see the poster.

Hello!

Set children the task of designing and writing a *Hello!* magazine style report on the footballers or their "WAGS" (wives and girlfriends). Get in copies of *Hello!* and *OK* to inspire them.

For more great football reading games and resources visit www.literacytrust.org.uk/footballresources for links to great activity sheets and other resources.

SPEAKERS

Author visits

There are many authors writing football books for children. Hundreds of non-fiction titles are published every year and dozens of fiction titles. Although non-fiction authors maybe be less easy to get to come to your school or library, the authors of football fiction below visit thousands of schools and libraries between them every year. They talk about their books, enthuse about reading and do activities from role play to penalty shoot-outs to keep their appearances as engaging as possible.

They usually charge a fee and expenses, unless they are on tour promoting their books.

This is a very brief guide to those authors, with contact details and website addresses for more information.

Other authors are available...

David Bedford

Books: *The Team series: The Football Machine, Top of the League, Soccer Camp, Superteam, Banned!, Masters of Soccer, Football Rules, Soccer Superstars, World Cup Heroes.* (Recommended reading age 7+)

In David Bedford's workshops, children invent their very own machine, explain how it works, and then begin a story about it. The theme is: hard work pays off - especially when you have a robot on your side!

www.davidbedford.co.uk
david@davidbedford.co.uk
012 6383 8060

Paul Cookson

Books: *I'd Rather be a Footballer, Give Us a Goal, The World at Our Feet.*

Paul is the Poet in Residence at The National Football Museum and for the Everton Collection. Performances and workshops can be for any age and large numbers. Always interactive and always entertaining, audience participation is non negotiable. Funny, original and memorable. Now with added ukuleles.

www.paulcooksonpoet.co.uk
paul-cookson@tiscali.co.uk
07891 551 315

Dan Freedman

Books: *The Kick Off, Shoot to Win, Golden Goal, Born to Play, Man of the Match.* (Recommended reading age 11+)

Dan Freedman visits schools, libraries and festivals around the country. He talks about his books and his career in football and because he worked with the England Team, he knows players like Steven Gerrard and Wayne Rooney.

www.jamiejohnson.info
dan@jamiejohnson.info

Cindy Jefferies and Seb Goffe

Books: *Hot Prospect, Long Shot, On the Spot, Team Player* (Recommended reading age 7+)

Stadium School event. What would it be like to go to a school where football was the main subject? Listen to a couple of the characters from Stadium School chatting. Then there is the football quiz. Remember what the characters said. They will have told you some of the quiz answers!

Jackie Mujico
020 7758 0282



Anthony McGowan

Books: *The Bare Bum Gang and the Football Face-off*, *The Bare Bum Gang battles the Dogsnatchers*, *The Bare Bum Gang and the Valley of Doom*, *The Bare Bum Gang and the Holy Grail*. (Recommended reading age 7+)

Anthony's events are full of fun and laughter, especially his Bare Bum Gang events where he reads from the books (including silly voices), asks the audience to suggest their own gang names and how they would build their gang den. There may also be cartwheels involved somewhere along the line...

www.kidsatrandomhouse.co.uk

lbennett@randomhouse.co.uk

020 8231 6439

Tom Palmer

Books: *Foul Play series: Foul Play, Dead Ball and Off Side*. (Recommended reading age 9+)

Football Academy series: Boys United, Striking Out, The Real Thing, Reading the Game, Free Kick and Captain Fantastic. (7+) Also: *The Secret Football Club*. (5+)

Tom runs his popular Football Reading Game across the UK. The game is part quiz about football reading, part penalty shoot out, in a large inflatable goal with a library-friendly ball. He talks to Y3 to Y8 about being a reluctant reader and encourages children to talk about reading in front of each other by using their excitement for football. Visit his website for various other football related activity packs.

www.tompalmer.co.uk

info@tompalmer.co.uk

07957 375 312

Bali Rai

Books: *Soccer Squad series: Starting Eleven, Missing, Stars, Glory!*

Bali talks to groups of children aged seven to nine about why football and writing are so much fun! He gets boys excited about reading and writing and girls excited about football.

rmaurice@randomhouse.co.uk

Mal Peet

Books: *Keeper, Penalty, Exposure*. (Recommended reading age 12+)

Mal Peet enjoys lively dialogues with teenagers, especially those who have read his books and have questions at the ready. He is happy to talk about his passions for football, books, writing, comics and anything else an audience cares to raise. He will even read from his books, if asked.

Eve Warlow, Publicity Officer

Walker Books

eve.warlow@walker.co.uk

020 7396 2468

Helena Pielichaty

Books: *Girls FC series: Do Goalkeepers Wear Tiaras?, Can Ponies Take Penalties?, Are All Brothers Foul?, Is an Own Goal Bad?, Who Ate All the Pies?, What's Ukrainian for Football?, So What if I Hog the Ball?, There's Only One Danny Ogle, Football Mad*.

Helena Pielichaty is renowned for her lively, interactive schools' sessions. With *Girls FC* she will begin with a potted history of the women's game and talk about the inspiration behind the series. The performance includes cheerleading and live post-match interviews with "players" from the audience. Suitable for both boys and girls.

www.helena-pielichaty.com

Eve Warlow, Publicity Officer

Walker Books

eve.warlow@walker.co.uk

020 7396 2468

James Riordan (aka Jim)

Books: *Match of Death, Football Stories, When the Guns Fall Silent, War Games*.

Jim will talk about either 'the match of death' during WW2 in Kiev between a Nazi team and the local (junior) Ukrainian Dinamo side, or about the kick-about between British and German troops on Christmas Day 1914. Jim is sometimes joined by England keeper, David James to talk about "racism in football" or South Africa's Aaron Mokoena to talk about playing football in Apartheid South Africa.

jim.riordan@ntlworld.com

023 9275 4797

Sophie Smiley

Books: *Bobby Charlton and the Mountain*, *Man of the Match*, *Team Trouble*, *Pup on the Pitch*, *Pirates Ahoy!* *Snow Goalie*, *Football Fever*. (Recommended reading age 7+)

An experienced teacher, storyteller and football fan, Sophie is happy to do readings, author visits, and creative writing sessions with any age group.

www.andersenpress.co.uk
eking@randomhouse.co.uk
020 7840 8710

Other guest speakers

As well as football authors, there are other great people you can invite to your school or library to talk enthusiastically about reading.

Local paper sports journalists can be wonderful guests. Often from the same streets as the children in your area, they can talk about how they get to see a lot of sport for free, how they meet and know footballers and how they became a journalist. Read your local sports pages and identify the right journalist. Contact them by telephone or the email address often listed in the paper, or via the newspaper's editor.

Local football club coaches and players can be great speakers, if you can choose the right one and encourage them to talk enthusiastically about reading. It is not always easy to get someone from a big football club to come and talk at your school or library, but it does happen, so it is worth trying. However, if you can not get players and coaches from major teams like West Ham or Leeds United to come to see you, it is worth asking smaller clubs, including non-league clubs. Non-league clubs are very keen to attract new fans, especially families, and are likely to accept your invitation. And as long as they are wearing a club tracksuit the children will hang on their every word.

Football clubs are not always easy to contact. They often have someone who manages public appearances of players and other staff. Try and find them on the club website or telephone the club switchboard. The job titles of the people you need to speak to will be: Head of Communications/Education, Player Liaison Officer, Playing for Success Centre Manager, Football in the Community Officer or someone on the press or media team.

Ask your school games teacher to come and talk about how he or she likes reading, or, if you are a library, someone from a local sports centre. Combine their visit with some light football coaching or warm up exercises in the school hall or library meeting rooms. Find a willing colleague or parent to run the training for you, if need be.

Guests from within

It can be expensive and difficult to get a guest speaker in, but there are options within a school or library. The following could speak about football reading: older children or young adults, other teachers who love football or someone from the council sport centres. Any of these could give an inspiring talk on what children could read about football, passing on their enthusiasm.

Working with the National Literacy Trust

The National Literacy Trust works with schools, early years and other settings to support the established link between increased attainment and the enjoyment of, and behaviours surrounding, all three literacy disciplines. Schools that are part of the Reading Connects network receive a wide range of resources and can share knowledge and practice with thousands of other schools that are committed to encouraging whole school reading cultures. The National Literacy Trust also runs Reading Champions which supports schools in getting boys to love reading. Through a motivational framework, boys develop as reading role models in their school and are rewarded with badges and certificates along the way. There are also toolkits, posters and leaflets available for download via the National Literacy Trust website, as well as ideas and case studies of effective reading championing. For more information about these and other school based schemes, visit www.literacytrust.org.uk.



FOOTBALL BOOK CLUBS

Book groups or reading groups are not always the natural domain of football loving children. Often, but not always, those who love football are not so comfortable with books, but here are two great examples of football reading groups: one in Manchester, one in Basildon. These case studies below are successful models to inspire, along with some practical advice.

Case study: Secret Football Book Club, Manchester

A primary school in Manchester came up with a great idea for motivating reluctant readers: 20 Year five boys who were not into reading, but were into football. Their teacher created a Secret Football Book Club. They met once a week, excused from ordinary lessons, and no girls were allowed in. (You could easily use this model for girls with a no boys rule.) They were given a password for each get together: if they forgot it they were not allowed in. They talked about football magazines and books and invited an author to come and talk to them. The boys felt special: it was their club. Talking about reading had become special.

Case study: Football Writers, Basildon

Meanwhile in Basildon, the Football Writers were meeting. Boys and girls with low literacy came together once a fortnight to take penalties, write match reports, visit West Ham United and put together a football scrap book. They adopted a children's football author, funded by the local excellence cluster. He asked them to help him plan his novels and they were the first to read his stories and gave him candid feedback. They hounded the teacher daily with "When is the next football writers' meeting?"

Premier League Reading Stars

Premier League Reading Stars (PLRS) is a national programme that brings together families every year to talk about reading. It uses the power of the Premier League to enthuse 7 to 11-year-old children and their parents or carers to read for pleasure.

Originally a partnership between the Football Foundation, National Literacy Trust and Premier League, with funding from Arts Council England, it is heavily resourced with the following: access to 20 books recommended by Premier League footballers, a trip to a bookshop to spend money on books, training into how to run a PLRS reading group, a series of book group discussions (with fun games) about books, a tactics book full of brilliant ideas and meeting a football fiction author.

PLRS is hard to reproduce in full, but there are many great ideas for book group activities and resources we can draw from it, all available at www.premierleaguereadingstars.org.uk. As mentioned earlier in the toolkit, we expect this project to be more widely available from 2011; please monitor the National Literacy Trust site to keep up to date with developments.

Wade Elliot
Premier League Reading Stars



How to run a football book club

You can get a lot of advice on running children's book groups from many websites, but some questions to ask yourself are: What is a football book group for? Who are you running it for? How are you going to recruit them? How are you going to run it? When is the best time to run it? And where?

You could also speak to the reader development librarian at your local library. They will have advice and sometimes resources to support you. As could your local Schools Library Service, if you have one.

Have a look at ideas on the Chatterbooks website or on www.wikireadia.org.uk, www.literacytrust.org.uk and local library websites have reading group pages too.

Family reading groups

Most reading groups for children are just that: for children. But, like Premier League Reading Stars, reading groups can be for their parents (or carers) too and involving parents can redouble the impact of your work. Parents and children can take the habit of talking about books home with them.

Can you find a time to involve parents? After school? In the early evening?

More tips on running football book clubs

- Have the children read one book together, or different ones that they can tell each other about
- Let the children choose what books they read
- Run a group for children in school time and after school, or for children with parents after school

Many of the ideas in the other sections of this toolkit will be useful for a football book group. You can play the games, do the activities and even invite a speaker to launch the group, or boost it as it progresses.



How to choose a book

There are many great football books out there for children, both fiction and non-fiction for all age groups. Choose a few from your library and see which the children respond to best, explore the section above about authors to help you choose good football fiction.

If you think books will be too intimidating, start with a football magazine. The most popular with children are *Match of the Day*, *Match and Kick*. Adult football magazines that could appeal are *FourFourTwo* and *World Soccer* – probably useful for your older young people too, who may find the first three a little young for them.

Also look at match programmes, club websites, fanzines and online fan forums (although be careful, as some of the latter are a little aggressive).

PARTNERS

Working in partnership is a great way of extending a project or activity and of getting free resources. Think about who could help you with prizes and sponsorship in your area. Or who could help you in other ways:

- local football club
- sports centre
- sports gear shops
- local companies that like to be seen to be supporting communities, such as solicitors
- schools
- libraries
- school library services
- role models like the emergency services
- local authorities

And, finally, the best partners of all are... parents.

Get parents to support your work to encourage their children to read. It is worth thinking about kicking off any activities you do with a big event aimed at families and to find ways of encouraging them to support any plans you have. Be aware that some parents may have learning issues themselves, or have negative memories of their own schooling, so be careful not to force anything. The good news is that nearly every parent wants to see their children do well, but if you present your work in a non academic and fun light, you may end up offering them some support too.



RESOURCES

There are a lot of free football reading resources available online or through the post. Here are a few good ones with information about how or where to get them.

On the Reading The Game section of the National Literacy Trust website (www.literacytrust.org.uk/footballresources):

- football book lists
- Images of book covers
- Other football-related reading lists
- Free posters of sportsmen reading (wrestling, cricket, football)
- Tom Palmer’s free downloadable football stories

Premier League Reading Stars wall chart – free, from www.premierleaguereadingstars.org.uk

Scottish Premier League Reading Stars: www.thebigplus.com

Male reading role models: Reading Champions www.literacytrust.org.uk/reading_champions

Building whole school communities that read: Reading Connects www.literacytrust.org.uk/reading_connects

Non National Literacy Trust hosted resources:

Chatterbooks website: www.chatterbooks.org.uk

Playing for Success website: www.playingforsuccessonline.org.uk

The Football Association: www.thefa.com

The Professional Footballers’ Association: www.givemefootball.co.uk

The Premier League: www.premierleague.com

The Football League: www.football-league.co.uk

Soccerbase: www.soccerbase.com

BBC raw www.bbc.co.uk/raw

The ideas in this pack can be used and adapted further for other sports. Many of the ideas above have already been transferred to rugby, cricket, wrestling and others.



PLAYER PROFILES

The National Literacy Trust has been promoting reading through football since Euro '96. Through its project, Reading The Game, it uses the power of football to deliver poster campaigns, family reading and writing groups and many other schemes that encourage the love of reading. Since 2001 the project has worked with over 50 football clubs to help teachers, libraries and Playing for Success centres promote reading and literacy to tens of thousands of children and parents.

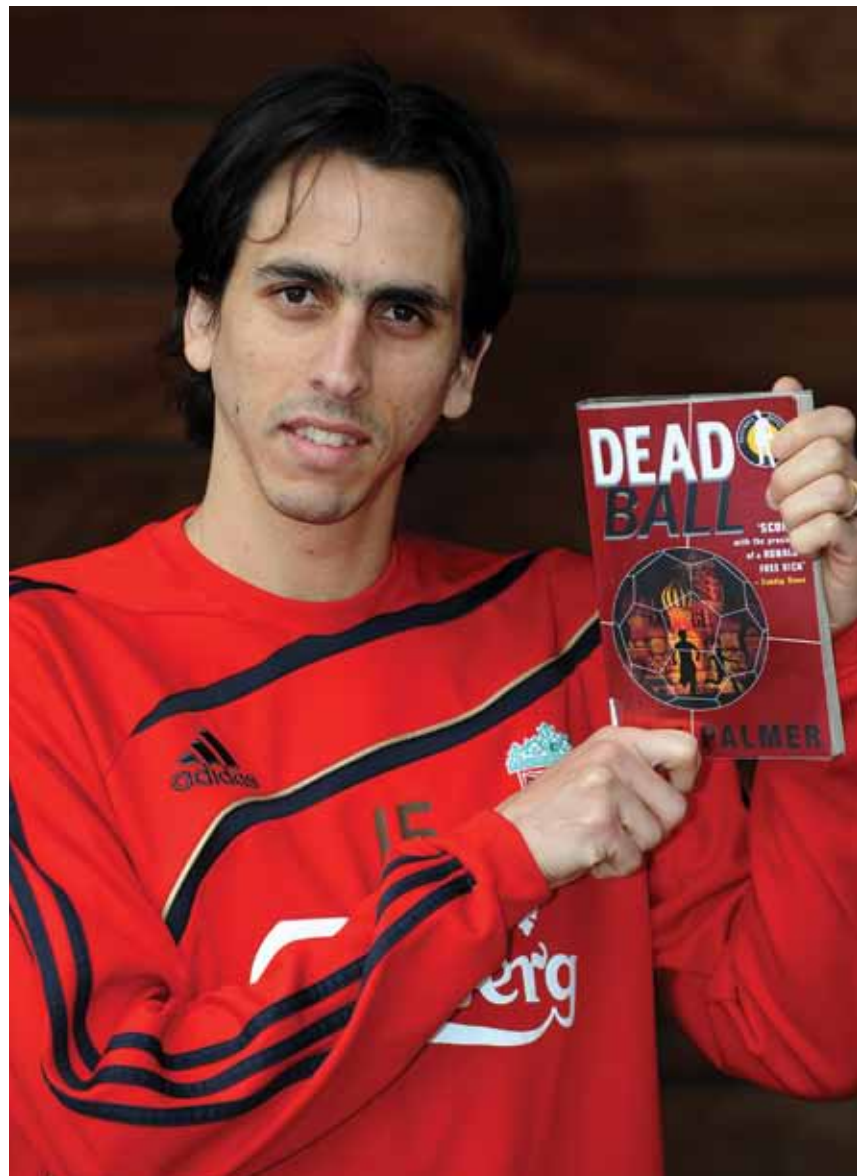
Tom Palmer is the author of Puffin's six-book *Football Academy* and four-book *Foul Play* series. He is also the author of *The Secret Football Club*, the story of a school where football is banned. Tom has been shortlisted for the Blue Peter Book Award amongst other prizes and his first book was chosen for the Booked Up scheme in English upper schools. Feel free to contact Tom through his website www.tompalmer.co.uk or at info@tompalmer.co.uk.

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Rebecca Palmer, wife of Tom, helped enormously by weeding out some of the jargon, cliché and sloppy writing as well as coming up with great ideas.

Several libraries and schools added to the ideas that Tom and Jim Sells at the National Literacy Trust have developed over the years.

Thank you to everyone.



Yossi Benayoun
Premier League Reading Stars

This toolkit was written by Tom Palmer on behalf of the National Literacy Trust.

For more information on the National Literacy Trust's sports-based literacy work, visit: www.literacytrust.org.uk/reading_the_game.

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Reading The Game

