



What is Mythical Maze?



Mythical Maze is this year's Summer Reading Challenge, held in every library on the Isle of Wight. Children are challenged to read six library books—*any* six library books—during the summer holiday, and are rewarded with a medal and a certificate.

Mythical Maze runs in all island libraries (including the mobile library and libraries run by volunteers) from **Saturday July 12th**.

What are the benefits of the Mythical Maze?

Participating in the Summer Reading Challenge can have a very beneficial effect on children's literacy, since it keeps them reading over the long break. Teachers nationally have reported a noticeable difference between the reading levels of children who take part in the challenge and those who do not.

Central to the challenge is the idea that *children choose their own books*. These can be fiction or non-fiction, easy or hard. Less able readers can therefore earn the same reward as able readers, which can be a very valuable confidence booster.

For that reason, schools are advised not to supply children with booklists of recommended titles to read for the challenge. Take-up figures from previous years have shown that doing this *discourages* children from taking part in the challenge. Even if the booklist is meant merely as a suggestion, children and their parents frequently interpret it as being compulsory, and therefore see the challenge as a chore, rather than as a pleasurable activity.



Please turn over

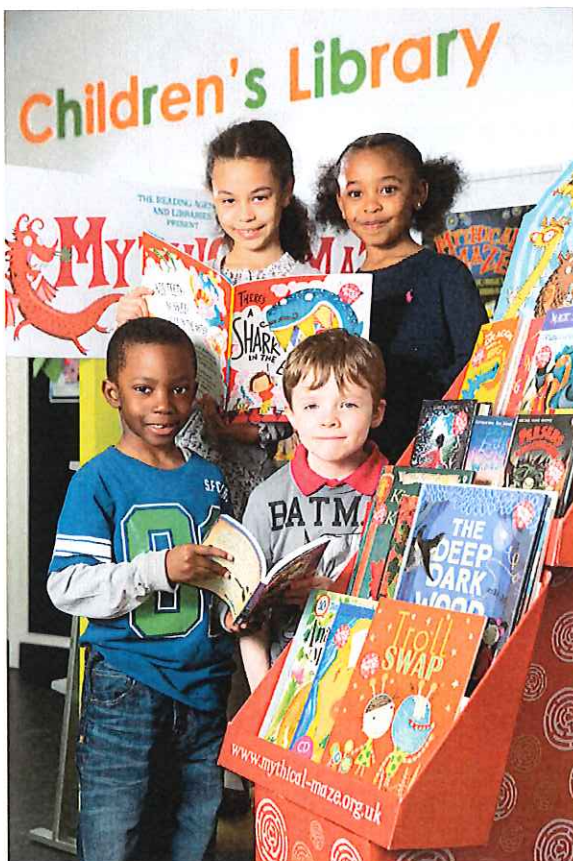
How can we promote the Summer Reading Challenge?

The challenge works best when libraries and schools work in partnership. Promotions that have worked in the past include:

- Mentioning the challenge in the school newsletter. This works best if it is done as near to the end of term as possible, so it is fresh in the children's minds.
- Inviting someone from your local library to talk about the challenge at an assembly. This has sometimes doubled or even tripled take-up in a school.
- Distributing Mythical Maze promotional postcards, one per pupil. You will receive these shortly.
- Offering a further incentive to every child who completed the challenge. However, please don't set the challenge as homework; it's all about reading for pleasure.)

In addition, you can download schools' resources from the Reading Agency website. These include lesson plans, classroom posters, activity sheets, staff briefings and a Powerpoint presentation aimed at children. Either Google "Summer reading challenge teacher resources" or go to www.readingagency.org.uk/schools

How do I arrange a visit or access additional materials?



Most local libraries intend to contact their local schools direct. However, please do not hesitate to get in touch yourself. We can:

- Send you promotional postcards for every pupil.
- Arrange a date for a promotional assembly.
- We can also send you a joining form that children can take home for the parent to sign, which allows them to join the library without a parent being present.

Please contact your local library, or Elspeth Jackson at Library HQ (203880 or elspeth.jackson@iow.gov.uk)

www.mythical-maze.org.uk