

Shared Reading FAQs

What is Shared Reading?

Each week, The Reader brings people together at Shared Reading groups across the UK and internationally. These groups are free, and for everyone.

At Shared Reading groups, a trained Reader Leader selects stories and poems to read aloud together. Everyone is welcome to share how the words make them feel, as well as their thoughts, ideas and memories. There is no pressure to talk or read aloud.

Everyone experiences what is read in their own way, but the shared language found in literature can help us to understand ourselves – and others – better. [You can find out more here.](#)

Where can I do Shared Reading?

The Reader is the UK's biggest Shared Reading charity, and you can find our groups all over the UK, and in all sorts of places. You can find our community groups on our [Find a Group page](#) and can pop along to one any time you like.

I can't find any groups near me, what can I do?

New groups are starting up all the time, so please do keep an eye on our Find a Group page and follow us on social media @TheReader for announcements of new groups. Or, you might like to try one of our online Shared Reading groups which you can find on our [Find a Group page](#).

How do I book / how much does it cost?

All Shared Reading groups are free. There is no cost to attend, and you can simply drop-in.

Will I be asked to speak or read out loud?

Some people prefer to just listen, and we are happy to have everybody there. You will never feel pressured to talk or read. We always make sure that everybody has the opportunity to talk and share their thoughts, or to read aloud if they would like, however there's no obligation or expectation to do so.

Who can attend a Shared Reading group?

Most of our community groups are for everyone. There are also a small number which may have restrictions as they take place in specific spaces or environments – this information will be clear when you see details about the group on our Find a Group page

Do I need to bring anything with me or do anything to prepare for coming along?

Just bring yourself! At Shared Reading groups, you do not need to read anything in advance or know anything at all about the text we are reading or the person who wrote it. The group's Reader Leader will bring copies of the stories and poems with them, and we will read them

together at the group.

What kind of things do you read?

All sorts! The Reader has built a large library of tried and tested stories and poems that we provide to our Reader Leaders to bring to their groups. Sometimes we might read a short story from start to finish, other times a scene from a play or a chapter from a novel. We read lots of poems, and sometimes we might make our way through a whole book week by week. Our collection is ever-growing and you'll find all sorts of writers from around the world, and from different points in time.

How big are Shared Reading groups?

They all vary in size, but we generally keep them no bigger than twelve.

I haven't read for ages, does that matter?

Not at all. Whether you're an avid reader or have not picked up a book since school, you are extremely welcome. We meet lots of people who discover a new love for reading after attending Shared Reading, as well those who really enjoy coming to the group but never read outside of that.

English is not my first language, will I still be able to join in?

Yes! It's a wonderful way to learn about other cultures and explore different perspectives. You may find that you don't understand all the words, but by reading together in the group and discussing our thoughts you will still be able to get lots out of the experience. We also run groups aimed at speakers of other languages (ESOL groups) which can be found on our [Find a Group page](#).

Can I turn up to a group that has been running for a while?

Absolutely! All groups are created to welcome new people at any point. It doesn't matter if a group has been running for 15 years or one week, we will be very happy to meet you.

I have access requirements; do I need to let you know in advance?

As we meet in all sorts of settings right across the country, we would advise you to check information about the venue on their website, or by calling them directly to find out more about access. At our groups, we have a copy of each story or poem for you to look at, and we read them aloud too - so if you have any difficulty reading or hearing, this should help you get the most from the stories and poems. Please do feel free to talk to your Reader Leader at the group if you would like additional support.

Is there any commitment needed from me?

You don't need to commit to any number of sessions, and it's completely up to you when you'd like to come along. You are welcome any time.

If you have any other questions you'd like to ask, [please feel free to get in touch](#).

