

## **Berkshire Book Award Case Studies**



### **Reading Blue Coat School case study**

Students at RBCS are always very enthusiastic about following the Berkshire Book Award. It is exciting that this is one of the few awards that is voted for by students, which means that is always one of their favourites that ends up winning! Although we talk about it with different year groups, the school follows it most closely with Year 7 students.

Every stage is followed by book clubs, but we also show the introductory video and author video in class when we ask students for nominations. When the longlist is released we use the longlist summaries and voting template to discuss the books, both in book clubs and classes. We try to have as many of the books available for students to have a look at, both paper copies and ebooks, and we try to not lend these out straight away so everyone can have a quick look first. After this we encourage students to borrow books and have a display up in the Library.

The shortlist event is extremely popular and students love the opportunity to talk about books with students from other schools and listen to a speaker. Once the shortlist has been released, we use book clubs and classes to pass around the books again and encourage students to read them and vote. We ask everyone to read an extract from one of the books in class, which encourages a lot of discussion. The winning book is announced in May!

### **Reading School case study**

#### *Nominations Stage*

Once the award launches, we ask all tutors to post a link to the nominations page on their MS tutor group Team. We post on our "All Students" MS Team and add an article to the weekly parent bulletin. We also talk about it during our weekly Junior Book Club. This can involve looking through the list of suggested eligible titles and asking for a show of hands or asking students to use the BBA website to cast their votes.

#### *Longlist Stage*

I normally buy at least two copies of the Longlisted titles. I timetable all Year 7 and 8 pupils for an English lesson in the library during December and we use the summary and marking sheets (available from the BBA website). Working in pairs, students normally have time to look at about 3 of the shortlisted books. They can also discuss any of the other books on the Longlist if they have already read them. The lesson ends with students casting votes for books they think should make it to the shortlist. This is fed back into the Award process as a spreadsheet with the total number of votes for each Longlisted title.

We also use the display material in the LRC and on our digital display screens. We post on the “All Students” MS Team, promote through the weekly parent bulletin (Christmas reading ideas for parents) and through tutors.

### *Shortlist Stage*

Our Book Club Year 8 members were invited to the Shortlist event 2025 and absolutely loved it! They are really keen to get involved again this year. They loved attending an author talk and getting books signed by the author. They loved the speculation about which books had been chosen for the shortlist before the big reveal.

The shortlist voting is done mainly through our Book Club, with activities such as Book Battles planned.

## **Denefield School case study**

### *BBA Case Study*

I run the BBA as part of Library Club. Library Club runs once a week, in the library, after school for an hour. We begin with book chat and recommendations then students can go play Warhammer, board games, or lead their own sessions. I also always have an activity planned such as origami, book folding, creative writing, quizzes, bookish games, character biscuit decorating, or specific discussion topics etc.

When the BBA is launched and nominations open, I spread out a taster selection of books that are eligible for students to browse and discuss. (If you are also part of the FCBG and participate in the Children’s Book Award, these books will also be eligible for the BBA and provides a nice crossover.) If I don’t have the books in stock I can print out a picture of the book cover with the blurb or we can look it up online. If there’s lots of interest in a book not in stock, I will make an effort to order it in.

We talk about what makes a book appealing, what ones we would (and would not!) like to read, any authors that might be familiar etc. I encourage students to nominate any of the books they would like to read. They are able to do this themselves online but often prefer for me to submit their nominations on their behalf. Some years I have printed the nominations page from the website for students to fill in and return to me, then I can easily submit on their behalf online.

Once the longlist is announced I usually host a “book tasting event” where students can browse each book, we share the first page and discuss each book in turn then students are encouraged to choose a different one each to borrow and read. Over the next few weeks, students read as many of the longlisted books as they can and share their opinions with the club. When it comes to voting for the shortlist I encourage students to log into the computers and submit their votes.

Once the shortlist is announced, we discuss the shortlisted titles and all try to read all of them in order to choose our favourite to vote for as the winner. Once again, I encourage students to vote for their favourite in Library Club towards the voting deadline.