Shropshire Bookfest would like to invite submissions from children's authors to be part of our very popular, effective and exciting creative writing initiative for primary schools – **Readers to Writers 2027**. The project will take place during the Spring term of 2027 and is for Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 pupils in Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin primary schools.

How the Readers to Writers project works:

As a counter-balance to our Book Award *reading* for pleasure project, 'Readers to Writers' focuses on encouraging children to *write* for pleasure. This has grown out of a biennial 'Authors in Schools Week' that we ran successfully for many years, when we would bring children's authors to Shropshire for a series of school visits and workshops. We discussed with teachers how the children might gain even more from the experience of meeting an author and how the impact of their visit might be extended further in the classroom. The response was "help us with creative writing, please".

We match up schools and authors as closely as possible. **Schools are sent group read sets of their author's books in advance (enough for every child to have a book)**, so that by the time the author visits, the children are already familiar with some of their work – and even more excited to meet them! The author visits to schools – which will take place during the week **Monday 25th – Friday 29th January 2027** – are ***bespoke creative writing workshops*** for the classes they have been linked up with. We ask authors to see themselves as **writing mentors** and to focus their workshops on giving children ideas and inspiration to be able to **spend the rest of the Spring term writing their very own books.**

We give each child a blank book to use, and they have free rein to write whatever they want, illustrate it, design the cover, write a blurb, etc. During the writing process, we support teachers with extra resources and we encourage them to keep in touch with their authors.

At the end of March, all pupils enter their books into a **county-wide creative writing competition**. Each pupil receives a handwritten comment from the Bookfest Reading Panel and a "Congratulations on Becoming an Author" certificate. Children who have written books that particularly impress the Reading Panel receive prizes and their books are published on the Shropshire Bookfest website. Prizes are also awarded to pupils whom teachers feel have worked especially hard on the project.

.

We are delighted that the positive impact of the project is supported by **a research study by the University of Worcester** conducted during the last Readers to Writers in 2023. Key findings included the fact that **"levels of engagement with the writing process increased", "pupils are more confident to take risks in their writing"** and, crucially, ***"author visits are pivotal in inspiring children to write creatively"***. **The full report can be accessed here.**

What we are asking authors to do:

Creative writing workshops, 25th – 29th January 2027

We ask all authors taking part in our Readers to Writers project to see themselves as '**writing mentors**' for the children and to **deliver bespoke creative writing workshops to each of the classes they visit**.

We ask authors to focus their writing workshops on giving children **tips, ideas, inspiration and above all the *confidence* to view themselves as writers**. The workshops will be used as the starting point for a whole term's work in creative writing, with the outcome of every child writing their own book.

Authors should therefore be experienced and confident in delivering workshops for pupils that offer genuine engagement with the creative process of writing – how to gather ideas, how to plan and structure a story, how to get started, how to edit, etc.

We have found through previous experience that pupils greatly valued being given an insight into real-life experience as an author: how they plan, how they edit, what mistakes they make and how to rectify them. As confirmed by the University of Worcester's research report: ***"The realisation that authors are 'real people' and face challenges themselves with the writing process is key."***

Copies of the author's books that will be referred to in their workshop will be sent to the schools just before Christmas (a book for every child in the class), so that children will have a chance to read these before their author workshop.

Each author will be given **at least two days' work** during the week 25th – 29th January (up to three 1-hour workshops per day; max class/workshop size – 30 pupils). Accommodation in Shrewsbury and transport to and from schools will be provided by Bookfest.

Before the workshops (early January 2027)

Full details of the classes each author will be visiting will be sent at the beginning of January 2027, including key areas that the teacher has identified that they would like the workshop leader to focus on as part of the workshop (see 'The Practicalities' below). Authors are encouraged to get in touch with the class teacher(s) ahead of the workshop to run through areas of content.

After the workshops (February – March 2027)

Where practical, we ask authors to keep in touch with their schools after their workshops, to provide encouragement to the children as they write their books.

The practicalities:

The author workshops will all take place in schools **during the week Monday 25th – Friday 29th January 2027.**

Each author will be given **at least 2 consecutive days' work** (up to 3 days, if demand requires).

Each author will be given a maximum of **3 workshops per day** for classes of no more than 30 children. Each workshop will be of 1 hour's duration plus 10 minutes of Q&A.

Shropshire Bookfest will provide **accommodation** in Shrewsbury for all the authors taking part, and a team of Bookfest volunteers will **transport** the authors to and from each of the schools they will be visiting.

Shropshire Bookfest will look after all the **arrangements** of school bookings, briefing of schools, etc.

Shropshire Bookfest will pay daily fees to the author for the in-school workshops **including pre-workshop preparation and any school liaison,** their **travel costs** (up to £100) and **accommodation costs** for the duration of their stay with us.

Two weeks prior to the workshops, authors will be sent a full set of background information on which to build their workshop with each school/class that we have booked, to include:

- Class teacher's name and contact details
- Number of pupils in each workshop
- Class age group
- Key areas of focus that the teacher has identified that they would like the workshop leader to focus on as part of the Readers to Writers creative writing project
- Questions from the class based on the books that they are creating and writing for the project
- Questions from the class based on the nominated title by the assigned author that will have been given to each child
- Sample of work by the pupils created thus far in the development of their own story/book for the Creative Writing Competition.

What to do now?

If you would like to be considered to take part in Readers to Writers 2027, please send through a pitch to include the following to **annabel.warburg@shropshirebookfest.co.uk**:

1. **Details of the writing workshop you wish to deliver**, including the approach you would take and an outline of suggested content, aims and objectives.

2. Suggested **book titles** to use as a reference base for your workshop (group read sets will be supplied to each class).

3. Confirmation of the **age group** you want to work with:
   Years 1 - 2 (aged 5 - 7 years old)
   Years 3 - 4 (aged 7 - 9 years old)
   Years 5 - 6 (aged 9 - 11 years old)

4. Your **daily fee** for up to 3 X 1hr (+10 min Q&A) workshops (max 30 pupils per class/workshop). Please confirm whether VAT is applicable or not. We will guarantee you at least 2 days' work during week 25th – 29th January 2027.

5. Full **author bio** and supporting images.

6. Full **details of writing workshop content** that you have done in the past.

7. **Links** to any online workshops/presentations that you have delivered already so we can sample the style of your work.

8. **Confirmation of your availability for in-school workshops in Shropshire**: at least 2 consecutive days during week **25th – 29th January 2027.**

The closing date for applications is Monday 14th September 2026.

We will confirm whether or not you are to be placed on the 2027 Readers to Writers author workshop programme by **Friday 23rd October 2026.** (The closing date for schools to book on to the Readers to Writers project is 12th October 2026. We will then determine which authors will match up best with the classes taking part.)

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact us.

Annabel Warburg, Project Manager, Shropshire Bookfest
annabel.warburg@shropshirebookfest.co.uk 07800 571174