



# Forest Of Reading<sup>®</sup>

Canada's largest  
recreational  
reading program

**Manual for Running  
School-Aged Programs  
in Public Libraries**

Official Wholesaler

**tinlids**  
best books for schools and libraries

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# Introduction to the Program

## About —

The Forest of Reading® is Canada’s largest recreational reading program – more than 270,000 readers participate every year individually, or at their school or public library or at home. This initiative offers ten reading programs for all ages, and each program consists of popular Canadian fiction and non-fiction titles. It is intended for readers across the country and those in Canadian international schools. The Forest occupies a major place of prominence in Canada’s literary landscape and encourages a love of reading in people of all ages.

## Goals of the Forest of Reading —

- To encourage children, young people and adults to enjoy reading
- To develop recognition for Canadian authors and Canadian books
- To contribute to the financial stability of the Canadian publishing industry
- To provide teacher-librarians, teachers, librarians, library staff and parent volunteers with a meaningful tool for improving literacy in schools and libraries
- To respond to community interest and needs

## School-Aged Programs Timeline —

In October, the programs are launched when the lists of nominated titles are announced. Most schools and libraries start to run the programs in the following January or February. Please see the “Suggested Timeline” section of this manual.

## Getting the Books —

Books are sold by the official wholesaler of the Forest, tinlids Inc. Tinlids offers schools and public libraries a discount when books are purchased through them. Alternatively, at the time of registration, books can be purchased through OLA, but will be shipped by Tinlids. You can find many of the books at retail stores and public libraries. Bookmarks and other merchandise may be purchased from the Library Marketplace.

## Official Wholesaler —

The Forest of Reading Official Wholesaler is tinlids Inc. Without their support, this program would not be possible.

## Forest of Reading Festival —

Our Forest of Reading Festival is a fun and exciting celebration of reading. With over 20,000 participants, the multi-day event is Canada’s largest literary event for young readers. The past two years, it has been held virtually to announce the award winners of the Forest of Reading.

Visit [forestofreading.com](http://forestofreading.com) for more information.

## Trademarks —

Most Forest of Reading Award programs are trademarked with either a ® or ™, so please ensure you are following the Brand Guide when using these programs for any purpose. Only registered sites are permitted to be using the Forest brand and its award program logos.

# Steps to Running Your Program

So you're ready to start your Forest of Reading Program? Excellent! Remember that you can run your program any way you would like! Some people start their programs as soon as the list of nominated titles are released in October, while some prefer to wait until the new year to launch. Either way works!

Now that you have registered for the program. Here's what to do next:

## **Order Your Books —**

The lists of nominated titles are released in October, and all books can be ordered from tinlids Inc., the official wholesaler of the Forest of Reading, at the time of registration, or throughout the year directly from tinlids.

Purchase at least 1 copy of each of the titles in a bookset from tinlids. Be sure to get them catalogued and processed. Books can be purchased at the same time as registration for your convenience.

When you purchase a bookset from tinlids, you will receive a Forest poster for your school or library, plus spine labels. We suggest ordering 1 bookset per 15–20 readers. The quantity is dependent upon how many readers you have participating in your program.

Try to gather colleagues to read the books prior to launching the Forest in your library, as your knowledge and expertise will help the participants read the books and engage them in conversation.

## **Visit the General Informational Website —**

[forestofreading.com](http://forestofreading.com)

- Visit the “Nominated Lists” webpage to view the books you'll be reading in the program
- Visit the “Resources” webpage to download documents for parents, as well as promotional materials to share with others.
- Visit the “Alternate Formats” webpage if you have a reader with a print exceptionality.

## **Log Into the Password Website —**

[forestofreading.com](http://forestofreading.com)

This is the most important part of the Forest – only Forest registrants have exclusive access. There's so many great resources, you will be amazed at how easy it is to run an amazing Forest of Reading program!

The password website has information and downloadable files, such as:

- Resources to use with your readers specific to the books (at least four per book)
- Resources to use with your readers for the overall Forest of Reading program
- Materials to create your Forest display
- Author and illustrator detailed information
- Annotations of the books
- Downloadable book covers
- Templates of resources that you can use and cater to your own readers
- Voting information and materials
- General resources for the program

Resources for each individual book will be available starting December 1.

## **Plan Out Your Program —**

Take the time to mark your calendar with some important dates and read the suggested timeline on the next page. Voting begins April 1 and closes April 30.

## **Visit the Library Marketplace —**

Buy your bookmarks, certificates, spine labels, and other merchandise at [thelibrarymarketplace.com](http://thelibrarymarketplace.com).

# Voting in the Forest of Reading

The Forest of Reading is one of the few reading programs in Canada that puts the power in the hands of the readers by allowing them to choose the award winners.

Participants read a minimum of 5 out of the 10 nominated titles, with the exception of Blue Spruce and Peuplier (readers must have or have been read to all 10 nominated titles).

However, we do leave this requirement to the discretion of the person running the program, as this program is meant to be fun and build confidence. If the person running the program feels that someone who read less than the required amount deserves to vote, the vote will be accepted.

In the spring, readers vote for their favourite nominated title and choose the winners of the award programs. The winners are announced at the Forest of Reading Festival in May.

## **When Is Voting in the School-Aged Programs? –**

The Official Voting Day is April 23. Voting for the school-aged programs can begin at any time after April 1 and all votes must be collected by April 30.

## **What is the Voting Process? –**

Those running the program are asked to follow an official electoral process with their readers.

Select an official voting day at your library. It can be either the official voting day of the Forest on April 23 or any other day that you choose.

Designate a specific area in your library or on your website for this special event.

Distribute the ballots, signs and other voting materials from the password website through the channels your library uses, (electronically, in-person, etc.).

Collect and tabulate the votes.

Please use the Group Vote Summary Form to collect the vote totals before sending them electronically.

Submit the vote totals electronically any time between April 1 and April 30. (Submit only the totals. We do not require hard copies of individual ballots or the hardcopy of your Group Vote Summary Form.)

The submission form will close on April 30 at midnight.

## **How Do I Submit My Votes? –**

Log into the password website at [forestofreading.com](https://forestofreading.com). From the menu, click on “Voting.” Please click on the link or image that says “Submit Your Vote Totals” and you can fill out the form from there. The submission form will open April 1 and close on April 30.

We recognize that some programs have an internal system that works best for their program, so feel free to adapt to your community (such as using a Google Doc to gather votes).

## **Where Can I Get Voting Materials? –**

You will find all the voting materials on the password website, under the “Voting” webpage.

## **What Are The Requirements for My Readers To Vote? –**

Readers must read at least FIVE of the books in Silver Birch Express, Silver Birch Express, Yellow Cedar, Red Maple, White Pine, Le prix Peuplier, Le prix Mélèze, and Le prix Tamarac.

For Blue Spruce and Le prix Peuplier, readers must have or have been read to all TEN of the nominated books.

However, we do leave this requirement to the discretion of the person running the program, as this program is meant to be fun and build confidence. If the person running the program feels that someone who read less than the required amount deserves to vote, the vote will be accepted.

## **What Else Should I Know About Voting? –**

In order for votes to count, institutions MUST be registered in the Forest. Please ensure branches in your area are registered before voting totals are sent in.

# Blue Spruce Supporting Activities

## About Blue Spruce™

ages 4-7, JK-Grade 2 | English, picture books

Start your young readers with our picture book award program – Blue Spruce! These books will enrich their learning experiences with beautiful illustrations blended with fun, interesting, and exciting stories. This is Canada's only picture book choice award program.

The Award is given out at the Forest of Reading Festival in every May.



### Storytime –

Incorporate the nominated titles into regularly scheduled storytimes. Read one book, and display the rest. Set aside a few minutes of each storytime to make a quick pitch for the Forest and draw attention to the nominated titles. Invite storytime participants to share their opinions about the title you just read.

Highlight the illustrations, draw attention to colours, point out characters or objects in the background, ask questions, or even simply connect the book to other elements of your storytime. For example: "Today, we talked about dogs. We sang songs about dogs, learned some dog rhymes, and now I'm going to show you a picture of a very silly dog named Stanley. Let's all look at Stanley together. Stanley and this book have been nominated for an award!"

If some of the Blue Spruce titles seem too advanced for large group programs, don't worry about reading the book through to the end. Instead, introduce it, spark interest, and then invite the child and their parent to read it together one-on-one at home in a less-distracting environment.

### Reading Buddies Program –

Set up a Reading Buddies program where teens earn volunteer hours by reading Blue Spruce titles to children at your public library. The program can also extend beyond teens if you so wish.

### Blue Spruce Mural –

Create a Blue Spruce mural for your library. Collaborate with patrons on what to paint/draw on the mural.

### Red Carpet Gala –

Encourage readers to dress up and bring their favourite stuffed animals as dates (the animals can dress up too). Decorate the space accordingly.

### Red Carpet Gala Ideas –

Have an actual red carpet kids can walk in on

Consider having a photo corner where kids can pose with their animals in front of a Blue Spruce backdrop

Read Blue Spruce titles and/or screen book trailers, and author interviews on the big screen

Play music and serve goodies

### Favourite Character Day –

Designate one day for participants to come to the library dressed as a favourite character from one of the books. Give prizes for the best costumes, like a copy of the book their character came from for them to keep.

### Forest of Reading Wall of Fame –

Every time a young reader reads a nominated title, they can stick a small copy of the book cover on a wall and sign their name to it.

# Blue Spruce Supporting Activities

## **Forest of Reading Tree Display —**

Bring in an actual tree branch, spray-paint it, and create leaves for it. When a book is read, the reader fills in the leaf and attaches it to the tree. Alternatively, create a tree branch out of paper. Alternatively, you can create a tree out of paper or cardboard and post it on the wall as your Forest of Reading display. There are also leaves for readers to write their names on available to download through the password website.

## **Photo Contest —**

Host a photo contest, inviting parents and caregivers to submit photos of them reading Blue Spruce nominated titles with their children. The contest could be broad or designed around a specific theme, such as “Where do you read?”

## **Voting Day Kick-Off/Finale —**

Host a big kick-off event at your public library. Invite members from the community to attend. You could also host a grand finale on Voting Day. Signs for ballot boxes, polling stations, and voting day are available on the password website.

## **Vote Tracker —**

Set up a big display that features the nominated titles. Create an area devoted to tracking vote progress. This would require tallying the votes on a regular basis and keeping the chart up to date as to which title is winning.

## **Library Website —**

Have a portion of your library’s website devoted to Blue Spruce. Include information on how to vote, titles available, rules, incentives, and encourage participants to write reviews of the books and post the best ones on your library’s website.

## **Fun Activity Programs —**

Offer fun activity programs that relate to Blue Spruce.

- Author visits (more information can be found in the “How to Book and Host an Author Visit” section of this manual)
- Online chats
- Prizes and games
- Online author biographies and reading lists
- Do-it-yourself book posters

## **In-Library/At-Home Promotion —**

Have a big emphasis on promotion of the reading program. Consider placing an insert in newsletters, creating in-library newsletters, posters, websites, and take-home flyers for parents.

# Silver Birch Supporting Activities

## About Silver Birch Fiction®

ages 8-12, Grades 3-6 | English, fiction

One of the Forest of Reading's most popular award programs, this is the one that started it all! Geared towards those in Grades 5 and 6, from fantastical, fun titles to serious, life-learning tales, this program provides a variety of stories for readers to enjoy.

The Award is given out at the Forest of Reading Festival in every May.



## About Silver Birch Express®

ages 8-10, Grades 3-4 | English, fiction / non-fiction

This award is unique in providing a mix of fiction and non-fiction titles for readers at different reading levels, especially those in Grades 3 to 4. If you have an ESL student, reluctant reader, a reader with exceptionalities, or others, this is a program suited for them!

The Award is given out at the Forest of Reading Festival in every May.



### Launch Party —

Host a launch party with the readers. Display the nominees, decorate your library, and hold a book talk. Take pictures of the event (make sure waivers get signed) and post the photos around the library or online.

### Scavenger Hunt —

Host an ongoing Scavenger Hunt in the library. Keep a list at the desk with hunt items that relate to each Forest program. Have the lists on hand to pass out to children that are participating. For example, find books that relate to a particular title or find staff members who have the same first name as a character in a nominated book.

### Character Costume Contest —

Designate one day for participants to come to the library dressed as a favourite character from one of the books. Give prizes for the best costumes, such as a copy of the book their character came from for them to keep.

### Silver Birch Mural —

Create a Silver Birch mural for the library. Collaborate with patrons on what to paint/draw on the mural.

### Silver Birch “Extras” Event —

Host a Silver Birch “Extras” Event. Ideas for this event are:

- Screen video trailers and author interviews between readings from the nominated titles
- Play group games related to the nominated books
- Have a photo corner where kids can pose to have their picture taken with oversized book covers
- Consider inviting an author to Skype

### Book Reviews —

Encourage kids to write reviews of the titles. Post the reviews on a Silver Birch display or online.

### Design Your Own Book Cover Contest —

Host a design your own book cover contest and invite kids to redesign a cover of a nominated title.

### Letters to the Authors —

Have pre-stamped postcards addressed to nominees. Encourage readers to be “Silver Birch Library Ambassadors” and write notes or letters to authors of titles they enjoy.

### Film Screenings —

Screen films related to nominated titles, like the same subject as a non-fiction nominee, or similar location or time-period.

### Forest of Reading Activity Sheets —

Use the activity sheets and other suggestions offered through the password website (word searches, crossword puzzles, or activity guides).

### Vote Tracker —

Set up a big display that features the nominated titles. Create an area devoted to tracking vote progress. This would require tallying the votes on a regular basis and keeping the chart up to date as to which title is winning.



# Yellow Cedar Supporting Activities

## About Yellow Cedar

ages 9–14, Grades 4–8 | English, non-fiction

Yellow Cedar is the consolidation of our two school-aged non-fiction programs (Silver Birch and Red Maple). Readers will learn about real life stories and facts – these books are definitely conversation starters!

The Award is given out at the Forest of Reading Festival in every May.



### Launch Party —

Host a launch party with the readers. Display the nominees, decorate your library, and hold a book talk. Take pictures of the event (make sure waivers get signed) and post the photos around the library or online.

### Scavenger Hunt —

Host an ongoing Scavenger Hunt in the library. Keep a list at the desk with hunt items that relate to each Forest program. Have the lists on hand to pass out to readers that are participating. For example, find books that relate to a particular title or find staff members who have the same first name as a character in a nominated book.

### Character Costume Contest —

Designate one day for participants to come to the library dressed as a favourite character from one of the books. Give prizes for the best costumes, such as a copy of the book their character came from for them to keep.

### Yellow Cedar Mural —

Create a Yellow Cedar mural for the library. Collaborate with patrons on what to paint/draw on the mural.

### Yellow Cedar “Extras” Event —

Host a Yellow Cedar “Extras” Event. Ideas for this event are:

- Screen video trailers and author interviews between readings from the nominated titles
- Play group games related to the nominated books
- Have a photo corner where kids can pose to have their picture taken with oversized book covers
- Consider inviting an author to Skype

### Book Reviews —

Encourage kids to write reviews of the titles. Post the reviews on a Yellow Cedar display or online.

### Design Your Own Book Cover Contest —

Host a design your own book cover contest and invite kids to redesign a cover of a nominated title.

### Letters to the Authors —

Have pre-stamped postcards addressed to nominees. Encourage readers to be “Yellow Cedar Library Ambassadors” and write notes or letters to authors of titles they enjoy.

### Film Screenings —

Screen films related to nominated titles, like the same subject as a non-fiction nominee, or similar location or time-period.

### Forest of Reading Activity Sheets —

Use the activity sheets and other suggestions offered through the password website (word searches, crossword puzzles, or activity guides).

### Vote Tracker —

Set up a big display that features the nominated titles. Create an area devoted to tracking vote progress. This would require tallying the votes on a regular basis and keeping the chart up to date as to which title is winning.

# Red Maple Supporting Activities

## About Red Maple™

ages 12-14, Grades 7-8 | English, fiction

This program is for students in Grades 7 and 8, and encourages Canadian writing and authors. Readers will get swept into these exciting fictional stories by Canadian authors while improving their reading skills.

The Award is given out at the Forest of Reading Festival in every May.



### Teen Advisory Group —

If your library has a Teen Advisory Group (TAG), get teens involved. Teens can read Blue Spruce titles to children, make book trailers, or read and blog about nominated titles. Create posters with teens reading Forest books. Consider running the program through your TAG.

### Scavenger Hunt —

Host an ongoing Scavenger Hunt in the library. Keep a list at the desk with hunt items in the library that relate to each Forest program. Have the lists on hand to pass out to readers that are participating.

### Character Costume Contest —

Designate one day for participants to come to the library dressed as a favourite character from one of the books. Give prizes for the best costumes, such as a copy of the book their character came from for them to keep.

### Forest of Reading Debate —

Host a Forest of Reading debate. Teens could debate the merits of one title over another, or assume the identities of characters in the books and argue a particular subject as their characters.

### Launch Party —

Host a launch party with the readers. Display the nominees, decorate your library, and hold a book talk. Take pictures of the event (make sure waivers get signed) and post the photos around the library or online.

### Red Maple Coffeehouse —

Host a Red Maple coffeehouse where teens can discuss the books, read excerpts, and perform. Encourage teens to perform music (songs inspired by their favourite book, songs mentioned in the book, or songs they think the character would like), dance (creative interpretive dance of the book), or do anything creative, inspired by the book.

### Posters —

Create posters of teens reading current nominated titles and post them around the library (along the lines of the READ or Get Caught Reading poster campaigns).

### Vote Tracker —

Set up a big display that features the nominated titles. Create an area devoted to tracking vote progress. This would require tallying the votes on a regular basis and keeping the chart up to date as to which title is winning.

# White Pine Supporting Activities

## About White Pine™

high school, Grades 9–12 | English, fiction

This program offers high school readers the opportunity to read the best of Canada's recent young adult fiction titles. With a mix of stories that are uplifting, difficult, and exciting, teens will devour this engaging book list.

The Award is given out at the Forest of Reading Festival in every May.



### Teen Advisory Group —

If your library has a Teen Advisory Group (TAG), get teens involved. Teens can read Blue Spruce titles to children, make book trailers, or read and blog about nominated titles. Create posters with teens reading Forest books. Consider running the program through your TAG.

### Scavenger Hunt —

Host an ongoing Scavenger Hunt in the library. Keep a list at the desk with hunt items in the library that relate to each Forest program. Have the lists on hand to pass out to readers that are participating.

### Character Costume Contest —

Designate one day for participants to come to the library dressed as a favourite character from one of the books. Give prizes for the best costumes, such as a copy of the book their character came from for them to keep.

### Forest of Reading Debate —

Host a Forest of Reading debate. Teens could debate the merits of one title over another, or assume the identities of characters in the books and argue a particular subject as their characters.

### Launch Party —

Host a launch party with the readers. Display the nominees, decorate your library, and hold a book talk. Take pictures of the event (make sure waivers get signed) and post the photos around the library or online.

### White Pine Coffeehouse —

Host a White Pine coffeehouse where teens can discuss the books, read excerpts, and perform. Encourage teens to perform music (songs inspired by their favourite book, songs mentioned in the book, or songs they think the character would like), dance (creative interpretive dance of the book), or do anything creative, inspired by the book.

### Posters —

Create posters of teens reading current nominated titles and post them around the library (along the lines of the READ or Get Caught Reading poster campaigns).

### Vote Tracker —

Set up a big display that features the nominated titles. Create an area devoted to tracking vote progress. This would require tallying the votes on a regular basis and keeping the chart up to date as to which title is winning.

# Promoting the Forest in Your Public Library

## **Launch Party —**

Host a launch party in-person or virtually with the readers. Display the nominees, decorate your library, and hold a book talk. Take pictures of the event (make sure waivers get signed) and post the photos around the library or online.

## **Character Day —**

Designate one day for readers to come to the library dressed as their favourite character from one of the books. Consider giving prizes for the most creative costumes — perhaps a copy of the book their character came from for them to keep.

## **Showcase Display —**

Showcase one nominated title from each category each week in a special Forest display, between October and May. Limiting the display to one title from each category will result in a small, special, and distinct display. Displaying select titles from all categories each week will reinforce the fact that the Forest is for people of all ages. Changing the display from week to week will build momentum for the program and keep the excitement going through the winter and into spring.

## **Wall Display —**

Designate wall space for Forest news, information, photos, book covers, and trivia, as well as important dates in the program.

## **Forest of Reading Wall of Fame —**

Create a Forest of Reading Wall of Fame on a bulletin board. Every time a reader reads a nominated title, they get to stick a small copy of the book cover on a wall and sign their name to it.

## **Forest of Reading Tree Display —**

Bring in an actual tree branch, possibly spray-painted, and create leaves for it. When a book is read, the reader fills in the leaf and attaches it to the tree. You can also create a tree out of paper or cardboard and post it on the wall as your Forest display.

## **Vote Tracker —**

Set up a big display that features the nominated titles. Create an area devoted to tracking vote progress. This would require tallying the votes on a regular basis and keeping the chart up to date as to which title is winning. Alternatively, you can track participants' progress on a chart and let readers add a sticker to their name every time they read a nominated title.

## **Voting Day Kick-Off/Finale —**

Set up a designated area for voting. Depending on available resources, decorate voting area with balloons, signs, and pictures of the nominated book titles. Signs for ballot boxes, polling stations, and voting day are available on the Forest of Reading password website.

## **Forest Merchandise —**

Purchase Forest merchandise through the Library Marketplace at [thelibrarymarketplace.com](http://thelibrarymarketplace.com).

## **Promotional Materials —**

Visit the Forest website to download promotional materials for free, such as promotional flyers to share with readers. Also purchase and use materials from the Library Marketplace, such as posters and bookmarks.

## **Contests —**

Hold contests periodically from October to April that are related to the Forest, such as i.e. readers who read the most books, reader(s) with the most creative cover pages, etc.)

## **Connect Through Social Media —**

Encourage readers to connect with the Forest of Reading online. Encourage readers to “like” the official Forest of Reading Facebook page and follow the Forest of Reading Twitter page. The folks at the Forest of Reading regularly posts important information about the program.

# Staff Engagement

**Think of creative ways to engage library staff members** with the Forest so that they can feel confident promoting it to patrons.

**Create a quiz about the Forest of Reading and invite staff to take it.**

Participating staff can be entered into a draw for a prize.

**Create Get Caught Reading or READ posters using staff members for**

**particular books.** This staff member can be that title's advocate for the year and answer patron questions, create read-alike lists for the title, or assist with reader's advisory work around the title.

**Arrange for a Forest representative to attend a staff meeting** to answer questions, take suggestions for improvement, and learn new programming/promotional ideas for the Forest from staff members.

If your library system has multiple branches, **consider holding a competition between branches** to determine which branch can sign up the most number of Forest participants. Consider competing against neighbouring library systems. Think of a prize or fun event that will benefit all competitors.

**Show one or two book trailers for nominated titles** between October and May, during regularly scheduled staff meetings. Bring the books with you and pass them around so staff can familiarize themselves with the titles. Talk about the particular program(s) the titles are a part of.

**Encourage staff to connect with the Forest of Reading online!** Encourage staff to "like" the official Forest of Reading Facebook page and follow the Forest of Reading Twitter page.

**The enthusiasm of program leaders and adults at the library** is the most important aspect of maintaining the interest of the readers. Encouraging adults to read one or more of the books pays dividends throughout the reading. Consider including as many staff members as possible.

**Get your CEO/Chief Librarian involved!**

# Community Collaboration

**Reach out to local homeschooler groups, parent groups, and/or literacy circles.** Provide the space and the books, but let the parents or group leaders run the program.

**Contact local schools who are running the program.** Remind school staff that your library has copies of all the nominated books. Suggest that voting happen at the library, in exchange for providing readers with library copies of the books. If resources allow, run events that mimic real-world election campaigns in the weeks leading up to voting day. Host an “all-candidates debate,” liaise with local schools, and have staff or volunteers champion a particular title. Include a moderator who can ask both serious and funny questions about the books, reading, and libraries.

**Collaborate with local schools.** If there are no trained library staff in the schools, offer your library staff’s expertise and go into schools to book-talk the nominated titles.

**Encourage other institutions that are not running the program to do so.** You can send our promotional flyers to those working in schools, libraries, and other institutions. Visit the Forest website to download promotional materials for free.

**You may wish to hold a joint-meeting early in the fall,** if you wish to establish a more-formal collaboration or partnership with another group or organization. Consider the following questions:

- How many children can be accommodated in how many segments of the Forest program?
- Who will order which books? Will one organization or institution order all the books and send an invoice to the other one(s)?
- When should the program(s) start?
- Will a letter go home to parents describing the whole program? If not, how else might the information be provided?
- Can funding be found to invite an author of one of the books to a mid-point session?
- Who will do what, and on what timeline?
- Are other meetings needed?

**Organize and throw a mid-point celebration bash for one or more programs.** Partner with another organization or institution running the Forest program and split the costs.

# How to Book and Host an Author or Illustrator Visit

Consider having nominated authors and illustrators visit for book talks in-person or virtually. Nominees meeting readers is a great way to form connections with books. Any budding young creators will get a first-hand encounter that may further develop their interest in writing.

Many Forest of Reading nominees are available to book school and library visits. Information for each nominee is available through the password portion of the website at **forestofreading.com**. We encourage you to go to each of the nominee webpages and contact them directly about visits. The Forest of Reading is not responsible for organizing these visits or paying the nominees but encourages schools and libraries to participate in this enriching experience.

If the nominee is a member of Authors' Booking Service (ABS), they can be booked directly through ABS. A full list of Forest of Reading nominees can be found on their website at **authorsbooking.com/forest-of-reading**. Authors' Booking Service can assist in coordinating children's authors that are members of theirs. Authors represented by this service pay no fee for promotion, webpages, coordination, advice, and newsletter listings. Authors are only charged a nominal fee when visits are booked on their behalf. Through ABS' website, each name is linked to the nominee's page, giving you direct access to information on their nominated book, presentation details, cost per session and travel costs.

## Choosing an Author —

Once the Forest of Reading password website is open, nominees (also referred to as creators here) available for visits will have their contact information on their nominee webpages.

**When making contact directly with nominees, please provide the following information:** potential dates, confirm book/topic to be discussed, grade range, group size, budget, and number of sessions required.

**If you are interested in an author who uses ABS, send an email to [abs@authorsbooking.com](mailto:abs@authorsbooking.com) with the following information:** the presenter or presenters that you'd like to consider for a visit; potential dates, grade range, group size, budget, and number of sessions required.

A single in-person presentation usually takes 45 to 60 minutes, and nominees can typically do up to four in a single day. Virtual presentations are often a bit shorter and can be done at any time since no travel or accommodation are needed.

## Special Events —

If you are planning to host an event (in-person or virtual) in the spring, with several nominees in attendance, please let Forest of Reading staff know as soon as possible (preferably in the fall) to ensure they don't conflict with the official Forest of Reading celebrations. Nominees get booked up quickly, especially during the week of the Forest of Reading Festival in May.

## Checklist to Prepare for In-Person Visits —

- Have an email exchange or a phone call with the creator well in advance of the visit.
- What is the exact cost of the visit, including travel, HST, and any other costs?
- Ask the creator to email you an invoice at least 3 weeks prior to the visit.
- How can the creator get in touch with you urgently on the day of the visit, such as while they're in transit? Exchange mobile telephone numbers.
- How will the creator be arriving? Do they know the exact address?
- Are there access issues, for example, parking spots, a particular door that they must enter?
- Are there mobility issues for this creator? Some may need assistance with equipment/books, others may have a physical disability.

# How to Book and Host an Author or Illustrator Visit

If the creator is arriving by public transit, will transportation be provided to and from the train station or subway station?

If the sessions are all day, is lunch provided? Are there any dietary restrictions for this creator? This is especially an issue for creators coming from a distance and from out of province.

What does the creator require in terms of table, microphone, audience configuration, and any other set-up requirements? An ideal venue for most creators is a school library or a room in the public library with good acoustics. A gymnasium is less effective but sometimes necessary.

Make sure the creator has water during the presentation, plus time for lunch and bathroom breaks

## Checklist To Prepare For Virtual Visits —

Have an email exchange or a phone call with the creator well in advance of the visit.

What is the exact cost of the visit, including HST, and any other costs?

Which platform will be used?

Ask the creator to email you an invoice at least 3 weeks prior to the visit.

## Book Signings for In-Person Visits —

Would you like the author or illustrator to bring in books for sale and autograph? If so, check and confirm arrangements prior to the visit.

Factor in 15 minutes after the presentation for book sales and signings if this has been arranged. Ideally, the author or illustrator will prepare an order sheet that can be sent home ahead of time.

Gather up your library copies and ask that the author sign them before leaving. Most will be delighted to do this if there is time. In the case of hundreds of books, this is not always possible.

## Prepare Your Readers —

Let them know well in advance when the creator will visit.

Read the nominated book ahead of the visit. This is the single most important part of preparation! Students respond to and benefit from creators visit more if they are familiar with their work prior to the presentation.

Have readers prepare questions. Ask readers to research them and/or the topic of the book.

## During The Visit —

For In-Person Visits:

Have a reader or staff member greet the creator at the door or provide instructions as to where they should go upon arrival.

Have them taken to the presentation location in time for any set-up they may need to complete.

Other details, such as chairs, display tables, microphone, and water, should also be taken care of prior to the readers arriving.

Make sure they know where the bathroom is and is provided with a place to hang their coat and bag.

Review and confirm the exact end time for the presentation and coordinate clocks. Some creators may ask you to indicate when they have 5 minutes left.

Stay in the room while they are presenting. Discipline issues must be dealt with by school or library staff.

For Virtual Visits:

Have a reader or staff member greet the creator online 10-15 minutes before to ensure that all tech is working (sound, microphone, Internet speed, etc.)

Ensure that creator can share their screen if they are showing a presentation and allow for time to ensure the way the audience is seeing the screen is suitable.

If suitable, remind the author or illustrator to stay on after the presentation is over and the audience has been removed to thank them and close the session.



# How to Book and Host an Author or Illustrator Visit

## **Paying the Author or Illustrator —**

Creators are paid by cheque immediately following their in-person presentation (or check with them before if they accept e-transfers or credit cards). The best way to do this is to give them a sealed envelope with the cheque inside as they're packing up to leave. For virtual visits payment method needs to be determined before the session.

## **Follow-Up —**

Readers will often want to have some contact with the creator after the visit has taken place. Some authors or illustrators will correspond with readers on their blogs, via social media or via email. Others will answer group questions if a staff person sends them by email. Ask the creator ahead of time what their preference is.

# Forest of Reading Program Contacts

## Programs Information —

### Forest of Reading®

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### Co-Chairs of Forest of Reading —

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## Book Purchasing —

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## Forest of Reading Support Material and Merchandise —

The Library Marketplace  
thelibrarymarketplace.com  
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## Social Media —

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## Websites —

forestofreading.com