

FESTIVAL NEWS



The 2010 Manchester Children's Book Festival was the first festival of its kind to run in the North West of England. Everyone who visited or took part enjoyed a fantastic four-day programme of events and activities. The Festival was launched by Poet Laureate Carol Ann Duffy and featured some of today's favourite children's writers, illustrators, books and characters.

Manchester Children's Book Festival 2010

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As the Festival theme was Children's Voices, we handed the task of reporting the Festival over to pupils from Manchester schools.

Thirteen Year 8 pupils from Chorlton High and Newall Green High schools made up our Twitter Team and twelve Year 5 pupils from Craven Wood, Crumpsall Lane and Temple Primary schools were our official Festival Reporters. Pupils from Wright Robinson High School choir opened the Festival and pupils from St Matthew's High School in Gorton sent in reviews and poetry written after taking part in the schools programme.

Festival News brings together extracts from some of the features, reports, reviews and tweets that these young writers produced. There simply wasn't room here to cover every event that took place, or to include all of the wonderful accounts written by our young reporters and tweeters. For full accounts and photographs see: www.manchesterchildrensbookfestival.co.uk



Manchester
Metropolitan
University

Young Journalists



Festival Reporter Asha was interviewed by BBC Radio Manchester's Matt White and read one of Michael Rosen's poems live on air.

The Festival Reporters were trained by journalist Rachel Broady before being let loose on our unsuspecting writers and festival organisers as our official Festival Reporters.

From interviewing the Poet Laureate to being filmed for BBC Newsround having tea and cakes with Michael Rosen, and joining in the Doctor Who Green Screen Experience, our intrepid reporters produced reviews, interviews and articles, which went live onto the MCBF website direct from the MCBF Newsroom.

Trained by Radio 4 Saturday Live Poet in Residence Kate Fox, thirteen Year 8 pupils from Chorlton High School and Newall Green High School became our official Festival Twitter Team.

O2 kindly provided us with Blackberries and helped familiarize everyone with the devices. From their first practice performance of monologue *Nahid*, written by Anjum Malik and performed by Thushani Weerasekera, our Festival



Top to bottom: Kate Fox, Carol Ann Duffy and Michael Rosen with the young journalists.

Tweeters showed a real flair for producing pithy 140-character comments.

All of their comments were streamed directly onto the Book Festival website and this first performance also appeared on the MEN Media website. Kate, Anjum, Thushani and our Tweeters were also interviewed for the Manchester Evening News and the South Manchester Reporter.

The Twitter Team went on to cover the majority of Festival events, having great fun along the way and providing us with a running commentary that made us laugh, cry – and sometimes cringe!





Festival Launch Day

The launch reception began with a performance of popular songs by Wright Robinson school choir, led by teacher Mary-Jo Rothwell.

Festival Directors James Draper and Kaye Tew introduced Creative Director Carol Ann Duffy and MMU's Vice Chancellor John Brooks who welcomed special guest Gillian Clarke, the National Poet for Wales. With former Children's Laureate Michael Rosen in the audience we are proud to say that the very first Manchester Children's Book Festival was launched with three laureates in the room.



 **@mcbf** Kaye Tew and James Draper, MCBF organisers & Morecambe morphing into Wise, introduce the Laureates at the launch event.

 **@mcbf** a collective of Laureates – a triad, a creation, a triangulation, an investment?

Earlier that day the building had been full of children of all ages, from Greater Manchester and beyond, who had come in to see our three laureates perform to younger audiences.



Poet Laureate Carol Ann Duffy and National Poet for Wales Gillian Clarke, with musician John Sampson, entertained an audience of Year 7,8 and 9 pupils.

Extracts from kids' reviews and interviews...


"I was at MMU when I met Michael Rosen, a famous children's author... He told me that he'd written an astonishing 140 books!"
- Saeed


"I interviewed Michael Rosen at a tea party. I asked a few questions about his life, his kids, his friends, his pets his childhood, his wife, his brother, his poems, his books and many more."
- Halima


"Michael Rosen thinks of his ideas by nature and daydreaming... He spends time writing for about 5 hours a week and writes on buses and trains." - Kaif


"Michael Rosen said that if he wasn't a writer he'd like to be a farmer, with cows, chickens, goats, horses, pigs, hens, sheep."
- Abdul

"Michael Rosen was HILARIOUS!!" - Asha

 **@mcbf** Greeted by a trumpet fanfare!

 **@mcbf** I feel sympathy for Gillian as she tells us her kite poem.

 **@mcbf** Her hair is fluffy. It's Carol Ann Duffy!

 **@mcbf** John Sampson is amazing!

By Friday the Festival was in full swing with readings and workshops taking place in a number of Manchester libraries, and also in schools across Greater Manchester.

Novelist Sherry Ashworth launched her new novel *Revolution* to pupils in Swinton, Liz Kessler went to Crumpsall Lane and North Manchester Library to read from her *Emily Windsnap* and *Philippa Fisher* books and prize-winning poet

Mandy Coe was out at Barlow High School sharing her love of poetry. Throughout the previous two weeks other writing workshops and performances featuring writers Mike Garry, Zahid Hussain, Anjum Malik, and others took place in schools across Manchester.



Meanwhile, back at MMU, more children were having a great time with Carol Ann Duffy and her musician John Sampson.

"On the same day as our interview Carol Ann held a performance of her book, *The Princess' Blankets*. I thought it was amazing because of the different tunes Carol Ann's friend John played to accompany the story. In the story, I disliked the mysterious man when he knocked on the castle door. It made me very anxious but thankfully there was a happy ending!" - Aqsa



At Manchester Town Hall there was an exhibition of work produced by children from Manchester schools.



Writer Frank Cottrell Boyce went along to talk to the children and to officially open the exhibition before rushing off to Longsight Library to read to pupils there.



"We had some sort of competition where each school had to shout a famous person's name out during a poem. Craven Wood primary school had to shout 'Elvis'. In the end, Crumpsall Lane won." - Nahia

@mcbf Youthfuls full to the brim with excitement.

@mcbf Children's constant chatter, soft coughs, wriggling on their seats. Silenced by a dark, rippling voice... *The Princess' Blankets*.

@mcbf "Embroidered with dark undergrowth," her voice deep yet velvety, melting to the audience's thoughts...

@mcbf John Sampson twiddling away on a recorder – in a Mozart wig..? Just an average day then.

@mcbf A young audience member said that she 'loved the way she wrote it and how it drew you in.' She would see Carol Ann again if she could.

@mcbf Frank's contemplating talking about constipation and ladies' bottoms!!! But he didn't... *Phew*

@mcbf A great huge choir from five different primary schools, teachers included.

@mcbf These primary school exhibitions are amazing!

@mcbf Art work decorates the walls like little hints about a world unknown to normal people like us.



In a neighbouring lecture theatre poets John Agard and Grace Nichols performed to 150 children from local schools.

On Friday 2nd July our class, Year 7 Emerald, from St Matthew's High School in Gorton went on a trip to the Manchester Children's Book Festival. We took a double-decker bus from our school to Manchester Metropolitan University, which we very much enjoyed.

When all the other schools had arrived and the audience had relaxed, Grace Nichols and John Agard entered the workshop... The room fell silent... John Agard began with *The Alternative Anthem*. "Put the kettle on," he bellowed, in his deep Caribbean voice... all the children's faces lit up and they began to clap.

John taught us that you can change the world by what comes out of your mouth and that anything can give you inspiration for a poem or a rhyme or a rap.

Afterwards, Grace read some poems like *Momma Do*, *The Hippo's Love Poem* and *The Baby Rap*. Grace's poems were very funny, but they also had a serious message. They told us about the problems in the world and how people are all shapes and sizes yet they all have feelings. Her poems were written from the heart.



Two other pupils from St Matthew's were inspired to write some poetry after their visit:

Island or London?

Island man wakes up refreshed and alert
The London man wakes up alone and hurt
They both wake up with a grin or scowl
London man knows he'll be working in a
while
Grinning, scowling, working, relaxing
London's busy, Island's chilaxing.

By Jayme Moyler

The Alternative Anthem

Get your toaster on!
Get your toaster on!
Before the butter's gone
Then spread it on your toast
Before you eat it all
Or otherwise
All you will have
Is some bread that's just been warmed.
It will not cook
Unless you plug the toaster in
Now say it with me,
Put the toaster on
Before your butter's gone
It is the British answer to hunger in the
morn.
Long live the toaster
That keeps us from hunger
May it always be clean
So in the light it can gleam
And may it not be filled with crumbs.
Now sing it from the roof tops
From the treetops and gardens
And even your balconies.
Thank you. Thank you very much.





By Bartek Karlinski

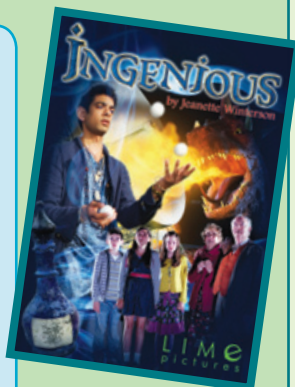


Too quickly, the experience was over. My best part of the day was when John played the flute and we all sang together... 7 Emerald had the time of their lives. When Bethan Ashberry asked what inspired John Agard to write the poem *Half Caste* he replied, "It comes from the heart."

Extracts from reviews
by Dominic Horner and
Morgan Powell

To close the day, writer Jeanette Winterson screened her BBC children's drama *Ingenious* and spoke to the audience about how she came to write it and about the filming process.

-  @mcbf The white rabbit has a pocket watch to keep Jeanette on time.
-  @mcbf Jeanette Winterson has just said, with complete conviction, 'Elephants have trunks, genies have magic'.
-  @mcbf She likes genies, dragons and Alice in Wonderland... how cool is she?!
-  @mcbf Dragons are expensive work... £75,000



Saturday was the main Festival Family Fun day and our young reporters and tweeters were everywhere, covering the various readings, talks, workshops and book signings.

Liz Kessler

"Liz Kessler can't live without writing; that's the best thing she loves doing. Another thing I know about her is that she writes on her own. No other person helps her to write but she does ask for other opinions. She got inspired by her English teachers, her mother and also her fans." - Ayesha



@mcbf Liz Kessler is giving us a performance, not just talking; but showing us some of her personal things in her own special box.

@mcbf "Remember when you said you are inspired by us? Well I'm inspired by you." said a little girl to Liz Kessler. How cute :)

Frank Cottrell Boyce

"Frank is the first author in his whole family. He writes on trains and at his house. If he wasn't a successful author his back up plan would be to carry on writing. Frank is very mad about reading and he hopes that he will be a very successful author." - Kaif

"Frank was inspired by his teacher, Sister Paul, who was a nun. When he was younger he also wanted to be an astronaut and the book he is most proud of is 'Cosmic'."



"Bet my t-shirt's worth a mint now. I've had it signed by Cathy Cassidy, Steve Cole, Daniel Blythe and Paul Magsr!"

Steve Cole

@mcbf Astro Cole is GO!!!

@mcbf A kiwi is an inflated grape wearing a really tough jacket.

@mcbf Little boy screams with laughter.

@mcbf Steve Cole is mad! But brilliant!



Andrew Cope and Lara



@mcbf Andy is giving us life lessons.

@mcbf Traumatic children, dogs wearing glasses... am I dreaming?

@mcbf Lara, his own dog, is a spy!

"Mum, that man's made me realize I need to do something with my life!"

- Axaviyo, age 8, on leaving the Andrew Cope and Lara talk.

Jackie Kay



@mcbf The White Rabbit has arrived but where is his pocket watch? Does this mean that the performance will be late?

@mcbf Laughter floats on the air as Jackie's vibrant personality draws everyone into a kind of embrace.

@mcbf Jackie Kay. Hip hip hooray!

Twilight Workshop

- @mcbf** Ooh exciting! I'm sat in a lab coat with a microscope in front of me :) I love Twilight!!
- @mcbf** The audience is so quiet as the woman reads from Twilight.
- @mcbf** Vampirism... Hehe learning. Clever things using fluorescent paint and microscopes.
- @mcbf** A sneeze comes out as fast as an aeroplane at take off and can travel the length of a bus!!!
- @mcbf** Did you know that vampires carry an infection – they are the infection.

Doctor Who and the Green Screen



- @mcbf** THE DOCTOR WHO GREEN SCREEN. OH MAN!!!!
- @mcbf** David Tennant Vs Matt Smith. A debate.
- @mcbf** Doctor Who books used to be in the factual section???
- @mcbf** The Doctor Who models are so lifelike...
- @mcbf** Q: How crazy do you have to be to write Doc Who episodes?? A: Like red on the colour-code crazy :)



Cathy Cassidy



- @mcbf** Everyone is settling in to watch Cathy Cassidy and the room is buzzing in anticipation. We'll keep you posted!
- @mcbf** Cathy Cassidy has told us that daydreaming is allowed in Maths in High School. Primary kids gasp, teens nod head like 'OH YEAHHH' ;D
- @mcbf** It would be brilliant if daydreaming was a subject.
- @mcbf** I keep staring at this little boy across the room with his face painted like a dalmation... I WANT MY FACE PAINTED! Cathy is amazing, too!

Monkey King

A performance in Mandarin with English subtitles

- @mcbf** Woah! They're talking in Chinese xD
- @mcbf** Aha, it's funny, even though they're speaking in a different language I can understand them.
- @mcbf** Monkey King was punished wrongly for protecting his master.



Monkey King, Journey to the West was performed by pupils from the Huaxia Chinese School.

Manchester Children's Book Festival 2010

The closing event of the first Manchester Children's Book Festival was 'Afternoon Tea at the Midland Hotel'.




The audience enjoyed a sumptuous afternoon tea and listened to readings from writers Sherry Ashworth and Frank Cottrell Boyce.




Sherry Ashworth by Helen Giles



After the enchanting readings, the audience competed fiercely in our Children's Book Quiz, which was hosted by Quiz Masters James Draper and Kaye Tew - your Festival Directors.

-  **@mcbf** Everyone feels like a teenager again as Sherry talks 'First Love' in 'Revolution'.
-  **@mcbf** Confession time from Mr Cottrell Boyce: he just rips off Frank O'Connor novels!
-  **@mcbf** The Manchester Children's Book Festival is amazing!!!



 **@mcbf** The white rabbit has closed the festival!! See you in 2012.

James Draper became known to our Festival Twitter Team as the White Rabbit, due to his habit of constantly checking his pocket watch to make sure everything was running to time... It did!

Festival Reporters
(from Craven Wood, Crumpsall Lane and Temple Primary schools, Manchester): Abdul, Ameer, Aqsa, Asha, Ayesha, Hafsa, Halima, Kaif, Mariyah, Naiha, Saeed and Sufiyan. Trained by Rachel Broady.

Twitter Team
(from Chorlton High and Newall Green High schools): Rachel Baker, Ruaridh Bisset, Alice Brotherton-Burns, Bradley Chimbwanda, Abby Coyne, Justin Deigh, Rebecca Hayes, Megan Morgan, Mathew Petit, Laila Siddique, Corrine Smith, Christy Tod and Hannah Warren. Trained by Kate Fox.

News coverage courtesy of MEN Media.
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Festival News was edited by James Draper and Kaye Tew and designed by Anne Tudor.

aimhigher...
greater manchester

