



Soroptimist International of Europe
in action: “Children read books for
children who need books”

Bookathlon

Suggested date
8 September
2017

How Does the Bookathlon Sponsored Reading Challenge Work?? *The Great Read-Off...*

1. A Soroptimist club seeks contact with a school they believe might want to participate in a bookathlon in which their pupils read for charity. The school needs to motivate the pupils and ask parents to give permission for their child to take part in the sponsored reading action. One has to find people/organizations who are willing to sponsor the children. Starting point here is the contact a Soroptimist club establishes with a school. SIE Programme team makes available a Power Point presentation (PPT) to the club and a folder to the donors. These information materials explain the goal and the cooperation between Soroptimist International Europe and My Book Buddy. The idea is to inspire the pupils to take part in the bookathlon. Please find more information on our project website <https://sie-mybookbuddy.org>
2. Ask the school whether they are willing to organize the reading marathon on 8 September. Another day would be fine as well, but 8 September is the UN Day for Literacy and is therefore a good occasion to promote reading books.
3. Find out whether the school would be willing to be the venue for the event. If not, there are other options, such as the local library, the town hall or residential care facilities or other public spaces. You might even read to young patients at the children’s ward of a hospital. Check every possibility and/or contacts inside your club. Organizing a bookathlon sponsored reading challenge at your home could be another option.
4. Take care of absolutely everything at the location. Propose a well set-up programme. Please find a number of alternatives on how to organize a reading event below, although it must be said that schools very often know what would work best.
 - Propose a time-slot for the actual reading to take place.
 - Find out whether it is possible to read at different location at the school, such as in every class, so that several pupils are reading at the same time. Or create reading corners in the classrooms where Soroptimist can read with a group of children and listeners.
 - Encourage children to read at home and ask their parents to document the pages /chapters they have read.
 - Older children might enjoy reading to the younger children at their school.
 - A whole class could be sponsored. Every child of one class reads for one hour from a book that is passed on to the next class after an hour.

- Make sure the readers have an audience. Ask your club members to come along, as well as friends, neighbours and grandparents.
5. Engage your club members to help: this might include welcoming people, setting up the room, preparing coffee/tea, documenting the number of pages which have been read or signing the sponsor card.
 6. Choose the upper forms at primary school or the lower forms at secondary school. Ask the teacher to recommend appropriate books.
 7. Agree on how many pages are going to be read. For example, one page each or one chapter or one poem.
 8. Prepare information for the local press (press release will follow).
 9. Another possibility is that a school or class or form chooses a specific school they want to sponsor by organizing a bookathlon. Please see the school page of the website: <https://sie-mybookbuddy.org/schools/>. The organizing Soroptimist club can provide photos of the school to sponsor, by contacting the local Soroptimist club that is supporting the school. If desired, the SIE Programme team can establish the contact. Mail enquiries to marlene.vanbenthem@soroptimisteurope.org
 10. Any questions? Please email Marlène.

We hope that with SIE's 1265 clubs we can make a difference for many children. Our ambition is to provide at least 34,000 girls with access to books through our project, i.e. the same amount as Soroptimists in SIE!

We are counting on your support and wish you success!

Marlène van Benthem (SIE Programme Director 2015-2017)

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